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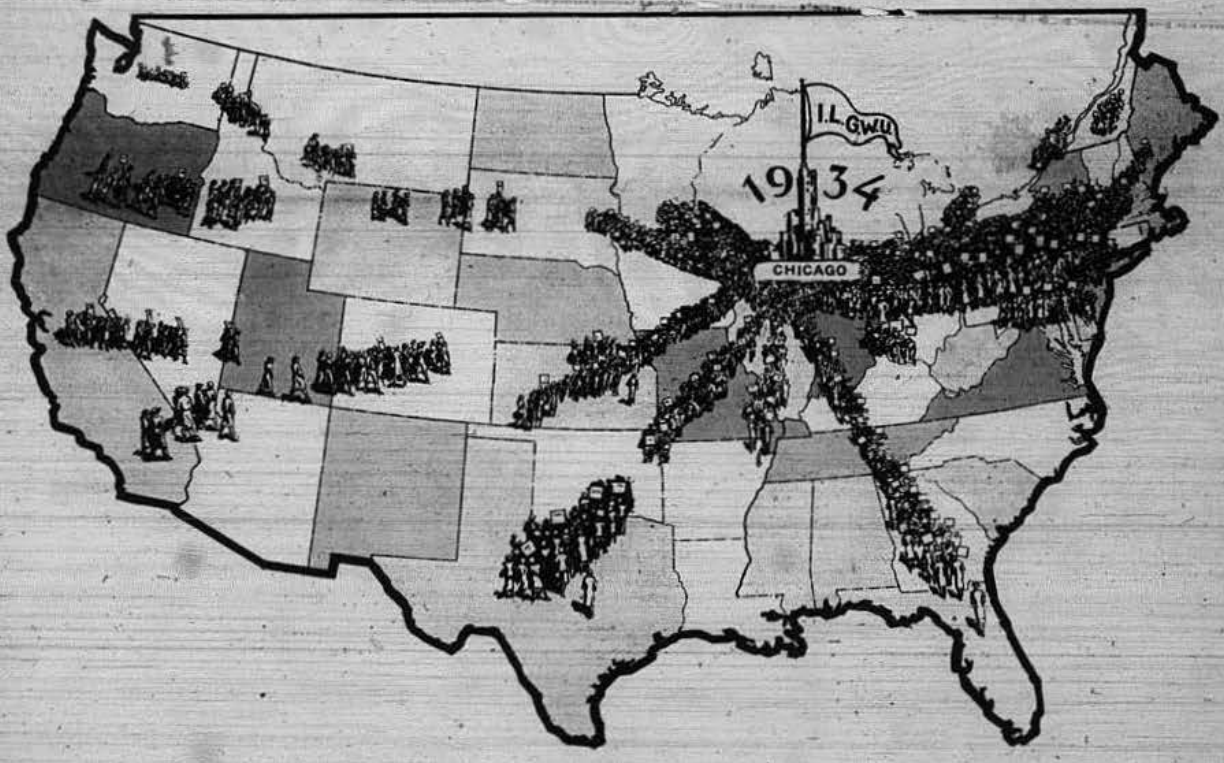
Justice (Vol. 16, Iss. 5)

International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU)

35th Anniversary Convention Number

JUSTICE

Official Organ of The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union



From Boston's gloomy alleys,
From the canyons of New York—
Jersey flatlands, Penn state valleys
Trenchant rises the Song of Work.

Coatmakers, dress and gown,
Grown old and grown young—
To the mighty Windy Town
Streams the *I.L.G.W.U* throng.

"We've won a place in sunlight
After thirty-five long years;
Gone are fears and gone the twilight,
Gone the garments drenched in tears!

"Our drama, our saga
Thirty-five years old,—nay, young;
We are marching on Chicago
Twice one hundred thousand strong!"

Vol. XVI. No. 5. **Jersey City, N. J., May-June, 1934** **Price 10 Cents**

. . Morris Hillquit and Our International . .

By DAVID DUBINSKY
President, I.L.G.W.U.

●

Two Socialist lawyers played a dominant part in the rise of the Cloakmakers' Union and of the I.L.G.W.U. They were: Meyer London and Morris Hillquit. London represented the flaming soul of the Union, while Hillquit symbolized its clarity of vision and directness of action.

Morris Hillquit was the lawyer and advisor of the Cloakmakers' Union and of the International for two decades. In truth, however, he was more than legal advisor. Hillquit was the designer of our industrial policies, the pathfinder in our struggles, and the spiritual leader of our masses. All of us who in these past years have held posts of responsibility in the Union, found in him a devoted comrade and a wise, dependable, clear-thinking spokesman.

Hillquit One of Us

For, despite his great gifts, erudition and high authority in his profession, and in the community as a whole, Morris Hillquit was one of us. As a young student, when he came here from the Baltic provinces, he worked as a shirt maker, struggling to make a living; yet, every free hour he could [illegible] his sweatshop labor, he would devote to propaganda for the cause which he held dearer than anything in life—the cause of the working class. He was one of the founders of the labor movement in our midst, the United Hobrew Trades, which he helped organize in 1888.

Hillquit's principal weapon on the platform, and at the conference table, was his persuasiveness, his sharp logic, unusual informativeness, and ability to marshal facts in defense of the issues he espoused.

Hillquit was the master debator at industrial conferences, and the spiritual father of nearly all our collective agreements in the past generation. His attitude at conferences was that of a professor at the head of a class. Our opponents feared him, yet profoundly respected him. He would lend dignity and orderliness to any parley, no matter how trying or provoking were the issues at stake. The moral force behind his pleading was colored by ethics of the highest order, the inseverable reflection of the social ideals which he preached and practiced.

The Architect Of Our Plans

While Hillquit was the architect of our aims and plans, we never attempted to burden him with details and problems of technique. But Hillquit was even more than an industrial advisor to our Union. He was our counsellor in internal organizational affairs as well, and to him we would appeal in times of inner conflict or disturbance, for a word of calm and judicious advice. Invariably, his direction was sound and constructive. In brief, he was the directing mind of our International in every important move, phase or development in times of stress

DAVID DUBINSKY

or storm, as well as of triumph and vindication.

His last public appearance, let it be recorded here, was in the interest of the Cloakmakers' Organization at the hearings on the Cloak Code in Washington, last July, when he flew from his sickbed accompanied by a physician and a nurse to Washington, to defend the position of our Union on the work hours and wage scales that were to be included in that new charter of labor conditions. On that sweltering afternoon in Washington, Hillquit spoke his last word from the public rostrum.

A Great Personal Loss

From the trial of 1915 to the code hearings in Washington was a long span. These years have brought us success and disappointment, bitter struggles and the taste of victory. It is a great pity that he died at the threshhold of a new era in America, when newer and greater possibilities seemed to open for his marvelous gifts and invaluable experience.

To me, personally, the passing of Hillquit at a time when such great responsibility was being thrust on my shoulders, at one of our International's most turbulent moments, was an inexpressively deep shock. The hopes which we all placed in him at that time, I believe, are fully expressed in the letter which I sent him in the name of the I.L.G.W.U. shortly after the Washington code conferences. That letter was the last official document the International wrote to Hillquit, and his reply, if I am correctly informed, was the last letter Hillquit wrote with his own hand before his death. These letters follow:

August 11th, 1933.

Mr. Morris Hillquit,
Belmar, N. J.

Dear Comrade Hillquit:

As we reach the final stage of the negotiations with the employers of the cloak and suit industry of New York for the renewal of collective agreements, I am impelled, for myself, personally, and for the leadership and the large mass of membership of our New York cloakmakers' organization, to tell you as sincerely and as strongly as I can convey it how deeply appreciative and grateful we are to you, Comrade Hillquit, for the masterly way in which you have presented the argument for our workers through all this difficult and trying period and how brilliantly you have pleaded their cause before the National Recovery Administration during the code hearing at Washington.

Our gratitude is all the greater because we all know how difficult, nay, physically impossible, it has been for you for the past few months to spare of your strength for the arduous work which this task required. Such of us as have witnessed your appearance at the Washington hearing, despite your physician's injunction, have had ample opportunity to convince ourselves of the depth of your attachment to our organization, a cause to which you have so unsparingly given of your great gifts for more than two decades.

And with this expression of deeply felt gratitude, believe me, Comrade Hillquit, also goes the prayer and the affectionate wish that you may very soon recover completely from the ailment which is harassing you at present, and that this recovery may bring you back to the helm of our movement which is so badly in need of your peerless guidance and leadership.

Accept my kindest greetings to yourself and to all of yours.

Very sincerely yours,
DAVID DUBINSKY,
President

Aug. 24, 1933.
Avon, N. J.

My dear Mr. President:

I was deeply touched by your kind note, particularly as I felt that it was not dictated by a conventional duty of formal politeness but expressed a very genuine and warm sentiment.

For this I thank you from the bottom of my heart. One of my main regrets in my illness has been my inability to be with you during the trying and eventful days of your negotations and struggles, and my main consolation has been that you acquitted yourself of the difficult task so splendidly.

You know I have always had a warm personal affection for you before and after your elevation to the presidency of the International. I had faith in you and in your ability to rebuild the shattered organization. Now I have every reason to be glad of whatever little part I played in inducing you to risk the venture and to take a sort of personal pride in the undeniable fact—that you have made good.

I expect to be back in the city immediately after Labor Day and hope to have a chance to see you more often.

With sincere congratulations, best wishes and cordial greetings,

Yours,
MORRIS HILLQUIT

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The 35th Anniversary Jubilee Convention

of the

I. L. G. W. U.

WILL BE HELD IN CHICAGO, ILL.

●

The opening ceremony will take place at the

CARMEN'S HALL—Ashland Boulevard Auditorium

On MONDAY MORNING, MAY 28, 1934.

Two special trains with delegates and guests will leave New York on Saturday, May 26, from Grand Central Station at 5:39 in the afternoon—New York time. We have obtained special fare reductions from the railroad company for our delegates and guests.

Aside from the sleepers, the trains will also carry day coaches for delegates and guests who would wish to take advantage of the $18.20 special fare to and from Chicago. Reservations should be made at once—for any of these trains —through Executive Secretary Fred F. Umhey of the General Office.

MESSAGES AND COMMUNICATIONS TO THE CONVENTION SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO CONVENTION HEADQUARTERS, WHERE ALL ITS SESSIONS WILL BE HELD:

MEDINAH MICHIGAN AVENUE CLUB
CHICAGO, ILL.

UNITY HOUSE, the Summer Rest and Vacation Home of the I.L.G.W.U. will be Open for Business and Ready to Receive Guests on Saturday, May 26, 1934.

THE OFFICIAL OPENING of the House will Take Place on Saturday, June 23, over a Week-End Replete with Extraordinary Amusement Features. Watch for Announcements in the Daily Press. Reservations Are Already Being Made. Apply to Unity House Office, 3 West 16th Street, New York City,—Telephone, CHelsea 3-2148.

JACOB HALPERN, Manager, Unity House

Future of the American Labor Movement

By WILLIAM GREEN
President American Federation of Labor

Special for the Anniversary Issue of "Justice"

The future of the American labor movement must be judged by its past. Its future is bedded in the past. Its past difficulties and achievements, its past problems and policies are a point of departure for any judgment that can be suggested for the future the past largely determines the program for the future.

Our First Problem

The first and outstanding problem that the American Labor Movement faces is organization. We are committed to organizing the unorganized. There are millions of men and women all over the land that need organization, that need the helping hand, the influence for good, the power to help determine the interests of those who are working in mine and mill, in factory and forest. Organization is the instrument and the only instrument that will give the worker his proper place in the community and in the industry, that will give him the means to proper standards of life, that will provide him with power to protect himself against injustice, against low wages, against unjust discrimination. Organization is the instrument to self-respect and to decency.

The workers must be organized not only for their own good but for the good of the community, for the good of the American peple, for the good of the workers themselves. It is true today, as it was in the day when Lincoln said that "America cannot exist half slave and half free", that the workers of the United States cannot remain half organized and half unorganized. We must and we will organize the workers—and we will not be stopped. Time is on our side. In the years to come—be they few or be they many—we will as workers get together to face and solve our problems in common. We will do that because they cannot be solved in any other way—because there is no other way. Let that be clearly understood—neither injunctions nor jails, neither bonuses nor campaigns of villification, neither denials of free speech and assemblage, neither shop committees nor group insurance will stop the tide of labor organization. Ours is the future—for there is no other future. The workers in the industries having common problems and common needs, having common interests and common destinies, must and will get together to solve them as a group, for, let me repeat, there is no other way. The destinies of the workers will be worked out through organization and the workers will not be denied the instrumentality for their common freedom as citizens in an industry where they may be consulted about their future.

We Have Just Begun

It must be remembered that we have just begun. The American Federation of Labor is a young organization. It was organized some fifty years ago—but that is only a day in history. In that short day we have accomplished much. In the face of unrestricted immigration, in the face of many racial difficulties, in the face of gigantic trusts that fought labor at every turn, in the face of an expanding continent and a shifting population, in the face of greed and misrepresentation, in the face of court decisions and injunctions, we have built this organization out of a few hundred men to some three million.

We have gone from no influence to the great influence of today, we have made the word of the worker count in the world, count in American industry, in American politics, in American social life, in American legislation and in American international relations. We have done all of this in less than half a century and we have done it from a very lowly start. In the next fifty years—with a solid organization, with public sentiment on our side, with experience to guide us, with the power that comes from achievement and success, with the doors closed to free immigration, with a common language due to public school education, with a large labor press, with the impetus of labor education—with all of these and with the hope and the [illegible] ture, nothing can stop the growth of the labor movement, nothing can stop our organization, nothing can stop it from achieving its destinies in the American community, a destiny that belongs to the organized millions of workers as a part of the American community. The enemies of labor are fighting the battles of greed—we are building a movement for eternity—for the ever increasing good of America and its people. Organization is the first part of our program for the future.

Organizing and Educating

The second is education. Organization is in itself the great education of the workers. It gives them the means to determine their problems and instructs them in the methods of working as a group. But to this we are adding labor education. We are adding classes to workers, books for workers that deal with workers' problems; we are adding discussion groups where the workers can get together and learn to handle their problems, learn to take their place in the community not only as workers but as citizens. We will not only organize but we will educate—not only for work but for citizenship. We will, by organizing and educating, make the worker the constructive force in American industry. We will not only raise his standards to comfort but through organization and education raise his efficiency and constructive contribution to industry. That, in short, is Labor's program ahead. The road may be slow and long—the task may be hard, but the battle is half won in the determination not to surrender, not to let up, not to give an inch of what we have. What we have, we shall keep, come what may, and to that we will add something every day forever.

Special Place of I. L. G. W. U. in Our Labor Movement

By ABRAHAM CAHAN
Editor Jewish Daily Forward

The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union began its career by fighting the sweatshop evil with all that the term implies. It was organized in the form of several independent unions first in New York, then in Philadelphia, Boston and Chicago. After a long series of brave strikes, covering a period of some fifteen years and accompanied by striking examples of loyalty and self-sacrifice, the campaign was brought to a triumphant conclusion. The shameful system was practically consigned to oblivion.

The organization continued its crusade for better living conditions. Its activities have been anything but an unbroken chain of easy victories. Indeed, there have been some sore defeats and disappointments of other kinds. The Cloak Makers' Union, the Dress Makers' Union and the other units, that subsequently came to be fused into the present International, have had their ups and downs. Upon the whole, however, the record is one to be proud of.

A Labor Giant

It has always been one of the stalwart and most progressive labor organizations in the country, and today it is one of the largest and most important members of the American Federation of Labor, one of the most powerful labor bodies in the world.

The right of Labor to organize and to strike for higher wages and shorter hours is one of the most important safeguards of a country's liberty. It is part and parcel of democracy. That is why one of the first things a Fascist dictatorship does in taking a nation by the throat is to outlaw its trade unions. There were no trade unions under the Czars, nor are there any under Hitler. This is a free country, so we have free unions; and the International is one of the best of them.

The World War brought about the world slump, an economic crisis which is shaking civilized society to its very foundations. As a direct result, the new republics of Germany and Austria have given way to despotic dictatorships.

So far as the great democracies of the United States, England and France are concerned, there is no tangible danger in that direction. Still, the great depression is putting these great nations to a severe test by causing them to make efforts in the direction of adapting their democratic systems to the needs of an economic readjustment.

Keeping Vigil

If trade unionism is impossible without democracy, the part which organized labor is destined to play in safeguarding democracy is clearly far greater than might appear on the surface. It is in connection with this relationship between Labor's economic solidarity and its social idealism that the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union is entitled to a special place in the front rank of organized labor.

What President Roosevelt is trying to do with the NRA implies a recognition of the fact that the chaotic state of our industrial life is bound to lead to catastrophic results; and that bringing some sort of order out of this chaos is a matter of life and death. Whatever the degree or failure of the President's efforts in this direction, the essence of his program is an endorsement of the idealism that has always vitalized the Labor movement in Europe and is rapidly coming to play a similar part in the Labor movement of the United States.

When one reads the high-minded speeches of President Green of the American Federation of Labor on topics such as Democracy vs. Fascism, or the economic crisis and efforts to readjust the industrial life of the nation, one feels greatly encouraged.

The Labor movement of the United States and the Labor movement of Europe are joining hands. The Atlantic ocean is not wide enough to keep them separated any longer.

All Convention Messages should be addressed: Medinah Michigan Avenue Club, Chicago, Ill.

International — Part of My Life

By B. C. VLADECK

I have started out several times to dictate a long and profound discourse on the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and every time I was compelled to tear it up. The reason is quite obvious. An organization,—especially as large an organization as the International—is supposed to be an impersonal body which can be treated only in an impersonal manner. An organization is supposed to be judged only by its acts and record but I never conceived the International as simply a body of people united in a trade union. Everything pertaining to the International has always come to me through people to whom the International was their very life and who quite naturally imparted to all problems of the organization a passion and an approach which by their very nature are personal. So when I think of the International, I think of Schlesinger, of Sigman, of Dubinsky and of hundreds of others who at one time or another, in one capacity or another, in one place or another, led the organization.

Great Personal Experience

It is because of this personal attitude that the progress of the International is with me not only a social phenomenon but a great personal experience. It has become a part of my inner personal life and I react to its advances and defeats as one reacts to the successes and failures of his own children.

Thus within the last year or so I was much wrapped up in International affairs and many, many a time I was happily thrilled,—not because the International has already achieved everything it might strive for, not that all battles and defeats are behind. I was thrilled with the fact that when the opportunity knocked at the door, the International was the first to open it and as a result of that the first to regenerate and revivify its organization.

To all of you, leaders and followers, men and women, to all members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union of whatever color, creed and race, —my hearty congratulations and sincere wishes for great victories in the future.

Welcome To Chicago, Convention Delegates!

By MORRIS BIALIS, V.-P.
Manager, Chicago Joint Board

Chicago Joint Board Arrangement Committee for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union 22nd Biennial Convention May 28, 1934

Back Row: (Left to right): Sam Stein, A. Rosenthal, Mary Fisher, Effie Burns, Alice Hinton, Joseph Chargel.
Center Row: (Left to right): Simon Packer, Morris Roth, Sol Flack, A. Sudin, Sarah Glazer, M. Dichter, Ernest Rutzen, Anna Klibanoff.
Front Row—Seated: (Left to right): I. Green, M. A. Goldstein, Aaron Sher, Morris Bialis, Meyer Bernstein, S. Lederman, Ethel Spink.
Picture taken by I. Weinstein, a member of the Chicago Cloak Makers Union, Local No. 5.

Each passing day brings nearer to us the realization that the Jubilee Convention of the I.L.G.W.U. is coming to Chicago by the end of May.

There is a holiday spirit abroad among the widest circles of our membership, to say nothing of the special committee which is in charge of convention arrangements. We have just recently gone through, in connection with these preparations, a veritable epidemic of picture-taking. First came the Joint Board, while President Dubinsky was in Chicago, and got itself photographed together with him. Followed the convention arrangement committee, the executives of Local 100, and now the other local executive boards are expected to fall in line with their photographs. And on top of it, we are being informed, we shall have, on the opening day of the convention, regular motion pictures, something that will immortalize us in a "talkie", let's hope.

Pictures, Hall, Music

Aside from picture taking, we were busy here for several weeks with finding a suitable hall for the convention. The differences of opinion on this matter were wide and varied—it had to be in the center of the town, near the finest boulevards, large, light, accessible, and heavens knows what not. Finally, the matter was settled to everybody's satisfaction. We got a convention hall that is located in the heart of Michigan Boulevard, light and large, and equipped, besides,—hold your breath!—with a golf course and a swimming pool. Bring along your bathing suits, delegates!

We were also discussing a membership parade to precede the opening of the convention. Now this is settled, and we are at present worrying about the route of the parade, the musical accoutrements, and you'd be surprised to learn what musical experts and connoisseurs we have here in our ranks. There is debating galore concerning the distinctions between an orchestra and a plain band, a problem which one of our "regular" wits attempted to settle by saying that while an orchestra invariably puts one to sleep a band occasionally has a tendency of waking one up.

Past Memories

Indeed, we feel here as on the eve of a great holiday. Another brief spell, and we shall have in our midst, as our guests, the representatives of our mighty international, assembled to listen to the report of the achievements of their chosen leaders over the past two years of storm and stress, and to legislate for the future life of this, so dear to our hearts, organization. For, it is this Union which took us out of the sweatshops and made us free men and women. And stories come to my mind,—stories which I have heard from old cloakmakers of the days when operators worked inhumanly long hours until they would fall exhausted over their machines; when pressers slep in the shops on rag bundles, too tired to go home for their few hours of rest; when finishers were being treated in the shops as so much dirt under the employer's feet, hardly as human beings at all.

I recall my own experiences, about 24 years ago, when I, as a small lad, became cloak operator's helper. My regular hours were from 7:30 in the morning until 6 in the evening, and then some overtime—until 9 o'clock. All I would hear, from my "teacher" and from everyone else in the shop, was—speed, speed and more speed—13 hours of driving labor daily was demanded from us kids for a miserable few dollars weekly. The boss would exploit my "teacher" without mercy, and the latter, in turn, would fleece me for all I could stand.

Story of Six Coats

I recall my first job as an independent operator; it was in a small neighborhood shop—I could not aspire to work in a big shop then as I had neither the money nor the inclination for bribing the big shop foreman without which a job in the shop was unobtainable in those days. After my first garment had been approved by the boss, I was assigned, I recall, to make up a bundle of six whole coats! I still remember the style of that coat, it was being made for Sears-Roebuck Co. I started first to make up the shoulders, which I regarded as the most difficult part of the garment, sewed them up and stretched the parts out on paper on the floor. Then I proceeded to the other parts, and by the time I got through with it, I discovered that the "shoulders" were gone and that on the floor, instead, were other "raw" shoulder pieces which replaced my finished parts.

Then I heard coarse, loud laughter, and I noticed that my neighbor, who was making the same garments, had stolen my "shoulders" and shoved his freshly cut parts in their place. With a bitter heart and being afraid even to protest, I managed to finish my six garments, and demanded from the boss to pay me off at once, but he informed me that I would have to wait a week for my pay. Next week I got all of three dollars for my labor. This employer is still in business downtown, but the operator, bless his soul, is no more amidst us. He apparently sewed his garments so fast that he came to a speedy end.

Past and Present

Such are the stories and the reminiscences of old, before we had a union in our trade, when the rule in the shops was: every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost. Today, such incidents seem unbelievable. True, neither the cloakmakers nor the dressmakers are acquiring wealth in the shops today, but, at least, they are being treated decently, and are treating one another as friends and fellow workers; they are working 35 hours a week and are earning a living wage. And it all came about as a result of persistent, driving educational and organizational work, as a result of the pioneer work of the founders and builders of our Union.

I wonder if the younger element that is now entering the ranks of the International appreciates all this. But those who remember the bitter days of old, the slavery and misery of the past,—they can best appraise the change that has come over our industry and our work conditions since the I.L.G.W.U. has become a factor and a power in our industry and in our own lives.

In the name of our Joint Board and all our members, in the name of the Convention Arrangement Committee, I welcome the delegates to the Twenty-second Convention, the chosen representatives of their localities, to our city. Hundreds of thousands of workers are looking forward to you with hope and expectations. You have a great responsibility resting on you, but we know that you will fully measure up to it. We have true unity in our ranks and this unity is bound to lead us to ever greater achievements in the future.

Sacred Tradition

By MORRIS C. FEINSTONE
Secretary United Hebrew Trades

There are great numbers of new members of the I.L.G.W.U. who do not share in the intimate knowledge of their Union's great past. But those new members may soon learn that their Union has had a difficult and glorious history. Sacred traditions have been established by the pioneers, traditions of sacrifice and struggle. Those who enter now the portals of trade unionism and benefit by the labors of forgotten workers, may share in those sacred traditions by upholding and respecting them, and, above all, by answering the present call for loyalty and support. This is a jubilee year in the International and its thirty-five years of struggle are crowned not only with holiday-making, but by prospects of much greater achievements in the years to come.

The ideal of a socialized mankind as yet has not been realized. We still have the priveleged and oppressed. But for those alive today, some share in the world's products has been gained, and, though this is not enough, it is a great thing, since it opens the possibilities of new gains for the individual worker and new hopes for the masses. From this point of vantage the achievements of the I.L.G.W.U. are to be viewed with respect, with enthusiasm, and with that greatest of all human tributes—loyalty.

On the Way to Self-Government in the Cloak Industry

By GEORGE W. ALGER
Impartial Chairman, New York Coat and Suit Industry

●

I congratulate the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union on its Thirty-fifth Anniversary. It has come in a year full of promise to the workers in the industry. Thirty-five years have seen this great Union develop from practically nothing—a mere association of workers who stood together when there were strikes and dissolved or disintegrated upon the coming of peace—to a great, highly organized, well-managed organization of workers, headed by intelligent, fair-minded, able and tremendously industrious leaders. Its growth has been almost incredible. The changes which have occurred even in the few years in which I have been definitely connected with the industry have been noteworthy.

The National Recovery program has been of great significance and value to our industry, workers and honest employers alike. Let us hope that by wise action, fair consideration of the problems of the industry, we may lay the foundations for not only industrial peace but industrial plenty in the years to come.

Two Years Ago

The difference between the conditions as they concern us now and the conditions of a few years ago is so well illustrated by an incident which is clear in my memory, happening two years ago, that I wish to mention it now. Two years ago conditions of competition in our over-competitive industry were simply terrible. There was constant complaint by the workers that they were not receiving their wages, or anything like the wages called for by the industrial contracts. There was, in reply, the complaint of the wholesalers and manufacturers that sweatshop conditions in uncontrolled houses and shops were such as to make the sale of decently made merchandise exceedingly difficult and at times practically impossible. Many great chain stores and retailers were buying generally from these sweatshop concerns and I was being besieged, as Impartial Chairman of the industry, with requests to try and do something about it.

I sent for the heads of three of the large chain stores and for the coat and suit merchandise manager of one of our greatest retail stores. I made a plea to them to give decent industry, paying decent wages, preference in their purchases of merchandise. They were sympathetic, friendly, but one and all declared themselves unable to do anything about it. They, too, were in a competitive world. They were competing with one another and met as best they could the demands of the consumers for the cheapest possible garments. They could not afford to lose their business by acceding to my request. Nothing happened and we went on under the desperate conditions of the depression. I continued to see before me at the hearings in which workers were involved pasty-faced men and women, whose wretchedness was all too apparent, who were almost obviously underfed. It seemed a hopeless and desperate condition. It took all the courage there was in the leadership of the Union to go on. Apparently there was plenty of that courage. Without it, the Union would have faced even far worse disaster than its members suffered during these hard years.

Probing Books, Records

I contrast this with what is happening in the industry today. Since the advent of the NRA label of the Coat and Suit Code, the advantages of the sweatshop employer have practically taken away. We are having distinct co-operation of the retailers who insist on finding the Coat and Suit Label on the garments they buy and which their code in turn requires them to have. Today, the Code office is spending its time on chiselers. We are examining the books and records of concerns whose books and records were never examined before, who are for the first time in their lives compelled to pay decent wages to their workers, whose previous operations have depressed standards which decent industry must maintain in self-respect and with fair regard to the rights of its workers.

We are refusing labels to concerns who do not comply. We are collecting thousands of dollars of wages which should have been paid to workers and which through the operation of the Code they are now receiving. This work is hard work. It is very important work. I would be derelict in my duty if I did not at this time speak of the unflagging and tireless efforts of the Secretary of the Code Authority, Mr. F. Nathan Wolf, who is so largely responsible for the organization of this work and the success of its operation. We are receiving today the hearty co-operation of the great chain store organizations and the retailers, great and small, who consistently refuse to receive goods which do not carry the label of the Coat and Suit Industry. We are aiding in every possible way the legitimate and honest dealer and merchant who has suffered from this cut-throat competition for years.

Complaints About Code

We are receiving plenty of complaints against the Code by persons to whom this form of control is objectionable and who wish to return to the bad days of a few years ago. It is my hope that we shall never return to those days. In this hard struggle in which we are now engaged, your own Union is playing a most effective and conspicuous part. No other American labor union has greater reason to be proud of its officers than yours. They are sincere, intelligent, industrially minded, capable of understanding the many problems of the industry. They are forceful and aggressive in understanding and maintaining the rights of the workers. It has been an immense pleasure to me to have been associated with them in the development of this great industry whose successful future must depend upon the resolute control of those forces which seek to exploit the worker, to create unfair and inhuman competition and to sell the blood of the worker in bargain basements, to the infinite injury not only of the workers but of every legitimate, decent manufacturer and wholesaler to whom honest standards have a meaning.

There are many things yet to be done. There are plenty of troubles with us always. However much progress we have made, in comparison with the bitter years of the past, much remains to be done. It is my hope that when we have the problem of chiseling fairly well in hand, for there is much yet to be done with chiselers, the industry may be able to take effective steps as a self-governing organization for extending our seasons. They are still far too short. The retailers must learn the lesson that overtime will not be permitted during the height of the season. It was refused this past season by the unanimous vote of the Code Authority. Orders must be placed earlier. If retailers wish their supplies, they must not expect night work to meet rush orders. The Union has spent thousands of dollars in enforcing these rules against overtime. The Code Authority has shared in this task.

Our Needs

We need more statistics of the actual operations of the industry. In other words, the industry needs eyes with which to see its own problems. These can be obtained when adequate statistics of operation are available and trade conditions can be made known to those who can profit by knowing.

The uniform payroll, which is now required, has been in operation only a short time. There was much confusion about the way in which these payrolls should be made out, particularly in the record of hours on piece-work, but these defects are being worked out and the payroll records will furnish a vast amount of useful information on the actual conditions, not of a single shop, but of them all. The piece-work system and the method of fixing piece-work prices is a new thing. Much remains to be done to improve the methods of fixing these prices, in establishing standards for prices and simpler and more expeditious methods of putting them into effect. It is one of the most difficult tasks which confronts the industry. It is inherently difficult and requires the highest form of constructive ability on the part of the representatives of the workers and those whose garments they make. The Labor Bureau, which has been established this year by the Code, made a beginning, though a most helpful one, on working out these problems.

Chance for Self-Rule

There are many other things which also remain to be done in the successful organization of this great industry. It is now, under national law, given the opportunity to function as a self-governing industry, enforcing standards which that industry adopts. These standards must be fair to all branches of the industry and just complaints must be met and honestly answered. I can only say in closing that I trust that under its Code, the Cloak and Suit Industry, which has had the benefit of years of experience as an organized industry, may carry forward the benefits of the past experience which has been yours and ours and may, by its action, evidence such wisdom in its self-direction that the Code may prove a blessing to all its workers and to all the manufacturers and contractors who form part of its busy life and who are willing to maintain and enforce those conditions of competition which the Code prescribes and which this difficult and highly seasonal industry so greatly needs.

Knowledge—First Step Toward Better Understanding

By ADOLPH FELDBLUM
Impartial Chairman, Dress Industry

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The adjustment and decision of disputes in various industries, through the medium of so-called "impartial machinery" set up by the various factors in the industry, have recently been widely advocated and adopted. But in the women's garment industry, it is not new: that industry long ago recognized its value, and made use of it rather than the cumbersome and frequently oppressive methods of "trial by combat" quite generally in vogue at the time.

The four factors in the industry—worker, manufacturer, contractor and jobber—all bound themselves through their respective organizations, by collective agreements, to have all grievances and disputes adjusted and decided by a "Trial Board," consisting of representatives of the groups involved, and presided over by a disinterested person designated as "Impartial Chairman." The decisions of this Board are final and are accepted without demur.

For the last three years, I have had the honor of being the Impartial Chairman of the Dress Industry, and hundreds of cases have been heard by Trial Boards over which I presided.

Better Understanding

No one unacquainted with the work can possibly imagine the infinite variety of the problems presented. Just when one is sure every possible type of case has been exhausted, something new comes along, giving fresh food for thought and frequently stimulating valuable suggestions for improvement of conditions.

Meeting thus, the various groups become aware of each other's difficulties. This mutual knowledge is the first step toward better understanding. As this understanding becomes greater with the passing time, the number of disputes and troubles will doubtless become less and less.

Complete harmony between persons of such widely conflicting interests can hardly be expected in this imperfect world; but I am more firmly convinced each day that approaching the problems in a fair and rational spirit makes their solution much simpler and greatly alleviates the hardships. To do this is the function of the Trial Board and the Impartial Machinery, acting with the full cooperation of all the factors in the industry, who recognize that ultimately the prosperity or adversity of one must be that of all.

Labor—Square and Unafraid

The Spirit of Comradeship in a Common Struggle

By MAX ZARITSKY,
President, Cap and Millinery Department, United Hatters, Cap and Millinery Workers' International Union

The 35th anniversary of the founding of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union is an event as dear to the hearts of organized labor, generally, as it is to those who have directed its destinies and to the members whose loyalty and devotion have enabled it to triumph over the many obstacles with which it had to contend through the years. Our international union, particularly, which has functioned in a kindred field, and whose ideals have brought us together on so many occasions, regards the commemoration of the 35th anniversary as virtually its own.

From very humble beginnings, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union has risen to a position of eminence and influence in the American labor movement. Its growth, and its achievements in the interests of large masses, have challenged the admiration of all who are familiar with the conditions that prevailed when it first entered the field and the many struggles it had to wage to abolish some and remedy others.

Profound Changes

In the 35 years that have intervened, profound industrial changes have vitally affected and even transformed the industrial life of the nation. They have witnessed the rise and fall of industries, the growth and decline of once-powerful trade union. Labor-saving devices have levelled the skilled to the status of the unskilled, and in the inevitable process of readjustment required to meet new and changing conditions not only loyalty and self-sacrifice were required on the part of the membership but a capacity for leadership and statesmanship became tremendously important. It speaks volumes for the leadership of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, as well as for the rank and file, that it emerges from this trying period, stronger, more influential, and with the promise of even greater achievements in the future.

Not an Easy Road

It was not an easy road, nor one devoid of innumerable pitfalls. Organized to cope with the problems created by an industry in which the sole hope of survival seemed to most employers to depend on their ability to exploit and oppress labor, with a steady stream of workers coming from foreign shores and compelled to take the first opportunity that offered itself for earning a livelihood, regardless of how intolerable the terms of employment were, and with the constant threat of employers, frequently carried out, of moving their plants to localities where trade union organization was doubly difficult to accomplish, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union found it necessary to fight for every inch of ground it gained. Nothing was won except by bitter and relentless struggle, and some of the major battles it led to a successful conclusion revealed a spirit of self-sacrifice and heroism that brought courage and inspiration to all branches of the labor movement.

It is, therefore, fair to say that in the heroic struggles which the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union waged intermittently during the past 35 years, it has not only achieved remarkable gains for its own members, but has helped the workers in kindred industries, including our own, and has created a feeling of solidarity which, though intangible, is possibly the greatest asset on which the workers must rely to wring concessions from the employers in all industries. If the struggles that were waged brought our organizations more closely together, and made each feel that a victory for one must be a victory for all, the benefits that were derived from such victories were not confined to one but extended into every branch of the labor movement.

Leaders and Rank and File

In achieving these victories, phenomenal as they have been, the determination and courage of the membership have been large contributing factors. The quality of the leadership, its capacity to strike as well as to negotiate, to inspire as well as to direct, have likewise contributed greatly and in a large measure to the successful outcome of the many historic encounters that fill the history of the International.

But above and beyond all these, invaluable as they have been, were the ideals that permeated both the membership and the leadership, and the vision that they have shared of the kind of a world which is possible, and without which, no matter what the immediate gains of labor may be, oppression and exploitation must continue to rob the masses of their heritage. Those ideals, and that vision, have enabled the members and officers of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union to meet adversity with fortitude, and victory with moderation. Confidence in the ultimate triumph of an ideal that can be realized only through persistent and relentless struggle, the attainment of a goal that victories may hasten but which even defeats cannot prevent, remain today, as they were at the outset 35 years ago, the motivating force for the energy which has marked the progress of the International.

One in Spirit, Ideals

During the major part of the 35-year span of the International's existence I have had the privilege of being intimately acquainted with its leading spirits and associated with its activities. The line of demarcation between their efforts and our was never clearly drawn. The spirit of comradeship, the knowledge that we were engaged in a common cause and striving towards a mutual goal, have obliterated the lines that might have otherwise existed. I have felt, as I have reason to believe the officers of the International have felt, that we were and are one, in spirit, in purpose, in ideals. This feeling, I know, is shared by the officers and the members of our organization.

We rejoice with the members and officers of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in the celebration that marks this event and on behalf of our membership, scattered throughout the North American continent, I send fraternal greetings. In the future, as in the past, we shall work together to realize the ideals we share, and employ the influence that our past efforts now enable us to exert to serve with increased effectiveness the cause of labor.

Progress Nothing Short of Phenomenal

By MATTHEW WOLL
Vice President, American Federation of Labor; President, The Union Labor Life Insurance Company

To those who have plenty, a little more means only a change in figures. To those who work for a living, a little more in income and requirement of less toil means better things to eat and to wear, more comfortable surroundings of home, relief from worry, improved health—in a word, a change for greater happiness and a more abundant life.

The coming of the organized labor movement meant much to the workers in the garment trade. Long hours of toil, low wages, child labor and sweatshops have characterized this trade ever since Hood wrote his "Song of the Shirt". But a New Day has dawned for the forgotten men—and women of the needle trades. Nothing more spectacular has happened on the American labor scene in the past year than the recrudescence of the Ladies' Garment Workers' organization.

Phenomenal Growth

The remarkable progress made during the past year has been nothing short of phenomenal. From a membership of 35,000, barely a year ago, to a present numerical strength of over 175,000, is an epoch-making event. It is not merely a register of physical growth. To me, who has for years past watched the rising and ebbing fates and fortunes of the Ladies' Garment Workers, this astounding rise contains a revelation of a spirited reservoir both thrilling and inspiring. This metamorphosis in the life of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union could not have taken place unless there were within the masses and the leadership of this labor organization abundant sources of vitality,—dormant and suppressed for a time, it is true—but always ready to rise forth at the first available and favorable opportunity.

As I look with the eyes of a friend at the record of your achievements since the summer of 1933; as I make mental notes in comparing the situation in your industry and in your organization at that time with what it is today, my heart gladdens. Like in former years, you are emerging today as a pioneer labor union in more than one sense. Again, you have forged to the front as the standard bearer of the shortest work-week on record. It was the I.L.G.W.U., which, in August, 1933, came through with codes legislating into existence the first 35-hour week in American industry. The classified minimum wage schedules and minimum pay rates which were written into these codes, guaranteeing to the workers enhanced purchasing power and to the industry a measure of uniformity and stability it has never reached before, have been other major achievements of the I.L.G.W.U.

Hopeful Feature

Perhaps the most revealing and hopeful feature of your great campaign lies in the fact that tens of thousands of women workers, in New York, in Chicago and in the smal towns throughout the East, where women's garments used to be manufactured on a sweatshop basis—women workers until now regarded as an unorganizable element—have joined your Union and are now being trained in the tenets of trade unionism.

This achievement bears within it, a remarkable promise for the American labor movement as a whole. It should serve as an inspiration to other divisions of organized labor in America. It is an example worthy of emulation by all divisions of united labor. If tens of thousands of underpaid, over-worked and mistreated girls in the garment factories —East, West and South—can be organized and brought into our trade union family, as you have so well demonstrated, then there is no reason why other masses of workers—men and women, alike—in all fields of endeavor and places of work, now being required to give service under the iron heel of anti-union employers, should not be attracted to our gospel—the creed of labor organization.

This period of revival in the I.L.G.W.U. coincides with the thirty-fifth anniversary of its existence as an affiliate of the mother movement of American labor—the American Federation of Labor. It is a happy coincidence, and I extend most joyful felicitations and congratulations upon the achievements noted.

No Casual Friend

Then, too, I express appreciation and grateful thanks for the encouragement and support extended to me as President of the Union Labor Life Insurance Company, by your officers and your organization. We, of the labor movement, are indeed honored and proud of your association with organized labor's life insurance enterprise and particularly delighted in the association of your President-General Secretary Mr. David Dubinsky as a member of our Board of Directors.

In extending these felicitations, these congratulations and expressions of appreciation, please understand I am not doing so in a mere prefunctory and casual way. They are the expressions of one who has always taken a keen, most sympathetic and helpful attitude toward your problems and your organization. Even in your darkest hours and your most trying moments I have never doubted your ability to rise out of the ashes of despair. And in this day of glory and joy within your ranks, tempered, though, as my hopes may be by the retrospect of but a recent past, I dare prophecy that the coming years will bring to you, to your present membership and to the tens of thousands whom, I am confident, you will yet enroll into your organization, a brighter day and an ever greater measure of economic security, in harmonious affiliation with the other divisions of organized workers in America.

UNITY HOUSE, the Summer Rest and Vacation Home of the I.L.G.W.U. will be Open for Business and Ready to Receive Guests on Saturday May 26, 1934.

THE OFFICIAL OPENING of the House will Take Place on Saturday, June 23, over a Week-End Replete with Extraordinary Amusement Features. Watch for Announcements in the Daily Press. Reservations Are Already Being Made. Apply to Unity House Office, 3 West 16th Street, New York City.—Telephone, CHelsea 3-2148.

JACOB HALPERN,
Manager, Unity House

The Past Nine Years in Toronto

By SAMUEL KRAISMAN
Manager Toronto Joint Board

The Toronto cloakmakers' union was [illegible] and has a rich and interesting history. My connection with the Union dates back fifteen years, so that I, personally, have gone through many interesting times in our organization, times which have brought out the best that was in all of us in our—sometimes—desperate efforts to maintain the Union.

Union Goes Under

I recall the activity prior to the January strike of 1925, when the membership of the Union was but a small group which was making efforts to organize the trade. At that time, the "left" and "right" movement was in its full fiery sweep and organization work was being conducted in the face of the most severe opposition. Nevertheless, the work went on, a general strike was called, two-thirds of the trade was organized, and prospects pointed to a complete organization of the trade in due course of time. But here is where the tragedy of the trade union movement became evident. The "right" and "left" movement grew more fierce and, instead of concentrating on industrial problems, the membership was divided into two battling camps, tearing at each other's throats, completely indifferent to the common danger. The result was inevitable—the Union did not last very long. Conditions in the factories became worse from day to day; wages dropped, work hours increased, the section and helper system grew by leaps and bounds, and before very long, the cloakmakers were completely at the mercy of the employers.

Nevertheless, Toronto can boast of always having a loyal group of trade unionists who, in and out of season, were and always are ready to stand on guard to keep the flag of the cloakmakers' union flying in the face of adversity. This group remained true to the Union during the years of 1926-7-8. It was they who, by word and deed, did all that was humanly possible to carry on. I cannot refrain from mentioning a few of them, such as Brother Abraham Kirzner, the former chairman of the Joint Board, Brother C. Schatz, one of the veterans of the Toronto cloak organization; Brother H. Wise, who at all times was a bulwark of strength, and such old-timers as L. Galinsky, L. Balfour, H. Frumstein, A. Weingarten, H. Smith, J. Cash, J. Citron, L. Jacobs and a host of others, too numerous to mention, who, by their willingness to sacrifice and suffer in order to maintain the Union intact, served as an inspiration in the building and organization of the entire cloak union. During those years, we faced numerous strikes and lockouts with meagre resources; many of our people were arrested and jailed, but notwithstanding, we forged ahead until the year of 1929, when the Union experienced quite an interesting time.

In Winter of 1930

It was then that the late Brother Schlesinger became president of our International and Brother Dubinsky, general secretary-treasurer. Things began moving in Toronto rapidly and dramatically. It seems that the cloakmakers of Toronto suddenly became electrified into action, and the desire for a strong union became so urgent that it swept all before it. I recall an incident during a convention of the American Federation of Labor, held in Toronto in the Fall of 1929, when the International delegation, composed of Brothers Dubinsky, Nagler, Katovsky and Sister Fannia M. Cohn, were present in Toronto. We had then decided to commence an intensive drive to organize the cloak trade and called a general strike for the Spring season of 1930. We utilized the presence of the International delegates in Toronto and called a meeting of cloakmakers who constituted the active group. I must now confess that we were not quite sure then that the meeting would be very impressive for the International delegation. Nevertheless, the meeting was a fine one. It was the first time that the cloakmakers of Toronto had the opportunity to become acquainted with Brother Dubinsky, and the impression made by him and the other delegates on the Toronto people was so great that our organization work from then on swept everything before it. Shortly thereafter, Brother Bernard Shane was appointed by Brother Dubinsky to conduct an organization campaign in Toronto.

The campaign was a landslide. When the strike was called, every cloakmaker left the factory and the trade was completely paralyzed. Never in our experience had we witnessed such a complete tie-up of work. The employers and the entire trade were completely taken by surprise and after two weeks of stoppage, a collective agreement was arrived at, granting union recognition as well as considerable wage increases.

Another Bad Spell

From there on, our Union went through another stage that was in itself historical. But it seems that the Toronto cloakmakers were better material for suffering and fighting than for conducting an organization in peace-time, for with the establishment of our Union in 1930, there developed internal dissension and petty personal political ambitions on the part of individuals here and there, which, after a while, began to eat into the vitals of the organization and brought disastrous results. The breakdown of the Union was accentuated by our ambition to organize the dressmakers of Toronto, which culminated in a general strike of dressmakers in January, 1931. That strike was the most vicious, the most bitter and the hardest any union ever faced in Toronto. During the course of the ten weeks that it lasted, dressmakers were fighting and sacrificing in an unprecedented manner. Two hundred dressmakers were arrested and either fined or jailed. The cloakmakers' union was completely involved and it was a foregone conclusion that the outcome of the general dress strike would seriously affect their existence. The dressmakers' strike was not a success. The subsequent demoralization can be easily surmised, and the employers were not slow to seize the psychological moment for an onslaught against the Union.

Of course, internal friction became more pronounced. So-called "revolutionists" helped to fan the flame of division and friction among the members, and the final result was that the Union simply fell to pieces. We approached the Spring season of 1932 with a skeleton of our former organization, and for the next two years, the Toronto cloakmakers had the experience of being completely at the mercy of the employers. Conditions and wages dropped to the lowest level within the recollection of our members. The ranks of the unemployed grew by leaps and bounds. Old-timers were thrown out of jobs and helpers were taken in to replace them. Everyone strove with all his might to maintain something for himself and in the scramble no one was secure.

Old Guard Sticks

And here, once more, the old group stuck to its post. The writer of these lines came into office at that time and within a short while the old-timers, with the aid of the younger people who had recently come in, buckled down to work and began to rebuild the Union step by step. We were faced not only with internal and organizational problems, but also with a dual opposition movement which tried its utmost to completely annihilate our cloakmakers' union. Nevertheless, it is to the credit of the vast majority of the cloakmakers that unionism is ingrained in them and with all their shortcomings and mistakes they remained loyal. The organization campaign of 1932 was carried on under circumstances that belie description. I remember vice-president Brother Kreindler being assigned to Toronto to conduct the campaign. Upon his arrival, he found a condition of the office, the officers and the active members existing in the miraculous manner of trying from day to day to borrow sufficient money to pay a telephone bill or buy pencils, stamps or meals for themselves. Brother Kreindler found them all very close to the starvation line. However, the active group was far from being down-hearted and I can safely say—and Brother Kreindler will bear me out—that he has never encountered such a loyal, hard-working, self-sacrificing group of union people as he found in Toronto. The International was then not in a position to assist us to any great extent, and we conducted an organization campaign, and then called a general strike in the Spring of 1933, purely on our nerve. The strike was about fifty per cent effective. We succeeded in settling it, obtaining small improvements and establishing a union of about eight hundred members upon which to build and carry on.

The Year 1933

The Summer of 1933 will be remembered by the cloakmakers as the most active and aggressive that the Union has yet experienced, Brother Langer and the writer of these lines jointly conducting the activities with the able assistance and cooperation of the loyal and active group of our people. Stoppages and strikes became the order of the day. Employers, large and small, were made to feel the weight of the Union and it was in the air that it was only a question of a very short time before the Union would regain complete control in the trade. The Fall of 1933 saw the inauguration of a campaign for a general strike in the Spring season of 1934, which swept everything before it. For the first time in our history, the campaign was conducted by local people and it proved a complete success. The strike was called January 16, the entire trade was stopped off, and after three weeks of intensive striking, an agreement was reached with the employers containing some original features. One feature is complete abolition of overtime until all unemployed are absorbed. To date, we have placed nearly all of our unemployed members to work, or, approximately, three hundred unemployed cloakmakers who were unemployed for years were placed on jobs since the general strike.

We are proud and happy that we can approach the coming convention of our International with a unified and solid organization. Our office staff at this time consists of Brother Langer, Brother Meagreman, one of our active members for a long period of years, and myself. Our work is conducted in a manner that we believe is conducive to the best results. The members are enthusiastic and are meeting their obligations to the Union in a [illegible] and our [illegible] are that Toronto will maintain itself and improve as it goes along.

This chronology would not be complete without mentioning that at this time we have quite a number of rising young men who show possibilities of good, sound union leadership, among them Brothers Cash, N. Cohen, H. Smith, A. Meagreman, B. Havelock, the present chairman of the Joint Board, who is always on the job for the Union's interests, and many others who, we are sure, will play a very important part in the work of our Union.

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express my appreciation to the General Office of the International for the fine cooperation and assistance which it has extended to us at all times. Since Brother Dubinsky has become our International leader, the bond between our Union and the General Office has become deeper and more intimate and we can always depend upon full guidance and sympathy.

On Its Own Power

By NORMAN THOMAS

It is with unusual pleasure that I write a letter of greeting to JUSTICE for its special Jubilee Convention number.

The I.L.G.W.U. has set an example to the unions of America on how to proceed in a time of crisis and opportunity. It took advantage of whatever opportunities NRA presented, but did not fall into a sycophantic and dangerous subserviency to the political government at Washington, which, emphatically, is still capitalist.

The Union has always known that it must depend upon its own strength and that no gift is secure to workers. What they seek is not a gift but a right, a right to be won by their own effective organization. That effective organization more than ever today must be political as well as industrial. To fight Fascism we need labor organized industrially, militantly fighting for the organization of all the unorganized, whether white collar workers or factory workers.

Also, we need labor organized politically. If labor does not capture the power of the political state, that power is bound to be used by the capitalists in a last resort along Fascist lines. It is fortunate for us that we have a few months or years of grace. There is a drift in America to Fascism but not as yet to a Fascist movement organized on a large scale nationally. We have no time to lose. We have the greatest cause in the world for which to fight—the emancipation of the workers, the sharing of abundance and of leisure, the conquest of war, the establishment of the federated cooperated commonwealths of mankind.

It is a fight that must be carried on in shops, in industries in the state—yes, in the world. It is one struggle whether it be for better things in the industry where we work or for peace, plenty and freedom throughout the world. I trust that the banners of the I.L.G.W.U. will be waved higher than ever and that its armies of peace will march forward with new confidence and ever increasing numbers, to the final day of triumph.

Early Conventions of the International

By SOL POLAKOFF
Former Vice-President, I.L.G.W.U.

The history of the International Union has already been told many times over in books and numerous periodicals. Still, I often wonder if there ever will be found an artist who will take the trouble to depict to our tens of thousands of new recruits the trials and tribulations of "the feeble band" of pioneers, and their grim determination to steer the frail bark and to keep it afloat in the troubled waters of the progressive labor movement until it reached the haven of 1910.

Who will ever describe the horrible conditions under which the workers in our industry had then labored, where the foreman was the sole boss not only over the bodies but also over the souls of our workers?

Back in 1897

When I came to New York at the beginning of 1897, the after-effect of the debacle of the general strike of 1894 was still felt. The United Brotherhood of Cloakmakers of New York, to use its full official title, became a shadow of its former self and lost all its prestige and moral hold upon the workers in the cloak and suit industry. To make matters worse, the fight between the followers of Joseph Barondess and his bitter opponents was still being carried on at union meetings as well as in the shops. The demoralization of the workers in the trade reached such a state that they rebelled and struck on their own accord and did not come to the Union for help. The employers took full advantage of that situation and used workers against workers, thus breaking up the ranks of the strikers. Under these conditions it was very seldom that a strike was won.

For not only had the great mass of cloakmakers in the industry lost confidence in the union, and unionism, but we ourselves began to feel that we were losing confidence in our own ability to build up a stable organization. We thought that, perhaps, by becoming a part of the great labor movement of America, and by affiliating ourselves with the American Federation of Labor, we might be better able to carry on. Thus the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union was born.

The First Convention

It was the first Monday in June, in the year of 1900, when the first convention was called to order in a little hall in Philadelphia. Only seven local unions responded to the call. The delegates present at the convention, seven all told, had remarkable foresight. They realized the historic significance of that convention and laid a foundation for a great and powerful organization. With the birth of the International a new day dawned for the workers in the industry. The fearful conditions that prevailed had to give way to the will and zeal of the founders of our International and a better life was about to begin.

The sessions of that convention were conducted in Yiddish, which made the delegates feel "at home." The majority of the delegates could neither speak nor understand the English language. The convention, which lasted only two days, was busy with preparing a constitution for the International and with adopting a multitude of resolutions, calling for the eight-hour workday and for the abolition of the sweat-shop system and also for the introduction of a union label in the ladies' garment industry.

A preamble to the constitution was adopted, which was copied from the Brewery Workers' International Union, then considered the most radical organization in the American labor movement. In fact some of its leaders were prominent in the Socialist movement in the United States.

A resolution was unanimously adopted to join the American Federation of Labor, and to issue at once a call to all cloakmakers' unions throughout the country to join the newly formed International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

After the election of a General Executive Board, with Brother Herman Grossman as its first president and Brother Bernard Braff as its first secretary-treasurer, the convention then adjourned by singing the "Internationale."

We Were Dreamers

Some considered us dreamers and were telling us that we were undertaking an impossible task; however, the few delegates and active members who took part in the first convention were men of strong fibre and nothing could shake their will and determination, and so we greeted the second convention, which in reality was a gathering of stock-taking for the first year.

From the report to that convention we learned that the International had spread its wings as far as the West, reaching to San Francisco, California, also increasing its membership from 2,310 to 3,976, an increase of 1,660 members for the first year. In the same report we also find that the financial standing of our International has a total income for that year of $506.62 and expenditures of $382.88, thus leaving a balance on June 1, 1901, of $123.75.

At that convention, we also note, the International, which was originally organized to be a federation of cloakmakers' unions, was becoming a real national union, with other crafts joining it, growing in members as well as in prestige, due to help from the American Federation of Labor. The International of that period reached its peak and glory at the Fourth Annual Convention held in the city of Cleveland in 1904, as shown in the report of that convention.

Barondess, Schlesinger

When the Cleveland convention was opened, we were faced with a very serious problem. Prinz & Biederman, one of the most powerful cloak manufacturers in that city, had locked out its cutters, members of the International, and refused to recognize and to negotiate with the representatives of the local unions. The convention then decided to elect a committee to intervene in behalf of the strikers. The committee, composed of Joseph Barondess, Benj. Schlesinger, and a few others, was successful in settling with the firm to the satisfaction of the Union. This was a great achievement and created a great impression on the ladies' garment industry.

Soon after the convention of 1904, the I.W.W. swept the labor movement in the country and also affected the membership of our unions, especially in New York, threatening with destruction all our locals throughout the country, as well as the International itself. It was a bitter struggle, and the old guard of the International came again to the rescue of their organization.

Many of us were not only blacklisted and discriminated against by the manufacturers and could not find work to support our families, but were treated in the same manner by the I.W.W.

While we were carrying on that fight with the I.W.W., union after union was beginning to fall out of the ranks of the International. Cleveland, Chicago locals and others were weakened and some of them disbanded entirely, and in this deplorable manner we kept on until 1907.

The 1907 Crisis

At that time the country fell into the grip of a great crisis, the greatest that America experienced until then. Conditions were going from bad to worse, thousands of factories were closed; hunger and dispair were seen everywhere. The organized labor movement had a bitter struggle to keep going. Wages were cut without mercy. The condition of the cloakmakers was even worse. Our bosses took advantage of this situation in barbaric fashion. The wages they paid and the inhumanly long hours that the cloakmakers were compelled to work cannot be described. The sweat-shop system spread throughout the city; the tenement house took the place of the shop. The cloakmakers were afraid to come to union headquarters, which were located in a small room near the Bowery. Even these headquarters could not be properly financed and the officers hid themselves every time they expected to meet the agent of the building, fearing to get a dispossess or to find the furniture put into the street. The International was only a name, and it was only a shadow of its former self.

In those trying, terrible days when the door of the International was about to be closed for good and no hope was seen anywhere, none of us were in a position to do anything to prevent the shame of closing the door of our International. Brother B. Fried, one of our oldest members, then secretary of the Operators' Union, found it out and on his own responsibility took some money of the local and brought it to the General Office, not thinking for a moment what might happen to him, personally, or to his own local, which was in the same deplorable condition as the International.

Courage Renewed

That same year, the convention was held in Philadelphia, with about the same number of delegates as when the International was organized in 1900. Not a bit of hope, not a spark of light, was shining before us. Many of the delegates from New York walked to the convention because the locals did not have sufficient funds to pay their railroad fares.

This was the smallest, the poorest, and the most hopeless convention that I have every witnessed since the founding of our International. The courage that helped us at all times seemed to have disappeared. The International was about to be given up!

At that moment of despair, a voice came calling to us, reminding us, commanding us, to stand with our International, and we responded. Again we took upon ourselves a new oath, and with renewed courage we began a campaign of organization among the cloakmakers in New York, which resulted in a great general strike in 1910, in which 60,000 cloakmakers took part for several weeks. The strike was won and resulted in a great, powerful union.

Let us remember the year 1900, as well as 1910 and 1934, as the outstanding years in the life of our International Union. In 1900 the International was born; 1910 is the period that marks the recognition of the International as a power, with a membership of nearly 100,000; in 1934, our International has trebled its strength, its membership, and its prestige. Let us hope that the lessons we have learned during these 35 years shall not be in vain, and that we shall strive to keep in harness till the day that our International shall have organized all the women's garment workers throughout the country under its banner and help create a better world to live in.

President Dubinsky Installs First Executive Board of Local 32

On the platform: Abraham Snyder, manager of the local, and Samuel Shore, executive supervisor of Local 62

UNITY HOUSE, the Summer Rest and Vacation Home of the I.L.G.W.U. will be Open for Business and Ready to Receive Guests on Saturday, May 26, 1934.

THE OFFICIAL OPENING of the House will Take Place on Saturday, June 23, over a Week-End Replete with Extraordinary Amusement Features. Watch for Announcements in the Daily Press. Reservations Are Already Being Made. Apply to Unity House Office, 3 West 16th St., New York City,—Telephone, CHelsea 3-2148.

JACOB HALPERN,
Manager, Unity House

New York Dressmakers' Section

Local 22 Installs New Officers

One of the most enthusiastic and spirited union meetings ever held took place at Mecca Temple on Tuesday evening, April 17, when the newly elected administration of Dressmakers Union, Local 22, was formally installed in office. Cheer after cheer rang through the crowded aisles of the big hall as the thousands of dressmakers there assembled voiced their approval of the past record and the future plans of the administration.

The meeting opened to the strains of the "Internationale" and "Solidarity" played by the Union Brass Band recently established by Local 22's educational department. When the curtain rose and showed the executive board members and officers, headed by Chas. S. Zimmerman, the manager, in the midst of a forest of flowers, a tremendous ovation occurred. Louis Nelson spoke first, commenting on the great importance of the occasion.

The installation of officers took place at the hands of David Dubinsky, President of the International, who, in a vigorous speech, outlined the great progress made by the International in the last year as well as the very grave and difficult problems ahead. Like all other speakers of the evening, President Dubinsky referred to the contractors' lockout against the workers then going on, sharply condemning it as a provocation against the Union and an attack upon the workers.

Music, Speeches, Flowers

Then came a really splendid program presented by the Union Mandolin Orchestra, organized from members of the Union. The concert was greeted with great applause. Julius Hochman, general manager of the Dressmakers' Joint Board, Luigi Antonini, manager of Italian Dressmakers' Union, Local 89, and Samuel Perlmutter, manager of Cutters' Local 10, made speeches. They were followed by the central feature of the evening—the address by Chas. S. Zimmerman, the manager of Local 22.

In forceful words, Brother Zimmerman pictured the tremendous headway made by Local 22 in the recent period, progress organizationally, financially and in the ability to defend the interests of the dressmakers. He referred to the long struggle for the unity of the dressmakers, culminating in the building up of a powerful dressmakers' union in the I.L.G.W.U. Brother Zimmerman concluded by outlining the program of the administration for the coming year.

To the singing of the "Internationale", this memorable meeting adjourned.

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About 13,500 dressmakers took part in the elections of Local 22, held on March 27. These elections resulted in a sweeping victory for the supporters of the progressive administration. Charles S. Zimmerman, progressive candidate, received 73 per cent of the vote, leaving 27 per cent for the "Left Group" candidate, Morris Stamper. All progressive candidates for business agent, for the executive board and for convention delegates were elected.

35 Years and the Dressmakers

Looking backward through the nearly two score crowded years of our existence, I see the life of our Union as a range of mountains silhouetted on the horizon. Our successes are become lofty crags and snow-capped peaks reaching into the heavens; our disappointments—valleys between.

Looking backward through the years on the path along which we labored, many images rise before me.

I see those eleven delegates who foregathered in New York on June 3rd, 1900, "In order to create a National Organization." Four locals and 2,000 workers they represented, and out of them grew our INTERNATIONAL of today.

What a glorious role the DRESSMAKERS played in building our INTERNATIONAL so great and strong!

I see them, back in 1909, rise as one individual to fight for a better living. Twenty thousand they are, imbued by one spirit, made strong by common sacrifice, a single ideal. I rejoice in the victory which brings to them higher wages and better conditions.

March 25, 1911. A day of sadness. Let us pause in tribute to the memory of those 146 workers who perished in the Triangle Waist holocaust. They did not die in vain, those martyrs. Their passing on served to stir us to greater and more heroic efforts in our behalf.

It is 1913. Once again the DRESSMAKERS rise en masse to voice their protests against the inhuman slavery of the times. And from their victory comes the first "protocol of peace," a protocol which brings with it the 50-hour week and better wages.

Three years later, it is 1916, and Europe is torn by the hell of bloody war. Again we DRESSMAKERS strike for our rights. Again we triumph and through our Union win gains in hours, gains in wages, gains in Union recognition.

1919, and the war abroad is over, but our struggle flares anew. This year we win the 44-hour week and an Impartial Chairmanship for the industry is created.

Only two years later and we strike again. Our Union becomes stronger, more potent in the victory.

Another brace of years has flown. It is 1923 and once again the Union leads the DRESSMAKERS to triumph. The five-day, 40-hour week is introduced to the industry. What a far cry to the demands of the workers for a six-day, 60-hour week back in 1885!

And then peace until 1930. Again we rise to assert our power, consolidate our gains of previous years.

We have come to 1933. We are in the valley. The sweatshop has reared its ugly head and the DRESSMAKERS are chained to the wheels of industrial slavery. It is time to STRIKE! The glorious victory of last Summer, you all know. We have won the 35-hour week, the minimum wage scales which assure us decent livings.

Through our victory we have become 90,000 strong. Our Union is at its mightiest and we have reached the peaks. We have contracts with 4,300 employers—manufacturers, jobbers and contractors. Our struggle through the years for complete unionization of our industry and complete recognition for our Union has been realized.

As we grew stronger, we became pioneers in many fields. We were among the leaders in offering educational opportunities to our workers. And it was we DRESSMAKERS who established the marvelous summer resort for our workers.

But the road still lies before us. Aye, upward, onward, that road shall lead us to still distant summits which thrust themselves about the clouds and are shrouded by our hopes, our plans for the future.

Long live the Union! Long live the International!

JULIUS HOCHMAN

A LETTER THAT NEEDS NO COMMENT

We, the workers of Rosenbeck and Rifkin, 253 West 26 Street, find it necessary to relate the following happening. The business agent, Brother Hollander, visited our shop and discovered that a colored worker by the name of Jean Sierra was working here as an examiner, but was not receiving the minimum wage.

When the employer refused to raise the wage of our colored sister, Brother Hollander called a stoppage. After a one-day strike, the employer agreed to the demand, and the girl's wage was raised from $16 to $21, which is the minimum.

The incident once again proves that the statement made by some elements that race prejudice exists in our Union is false. We commend Brother Hollander for the manner in which he settled this dispute and declare our solidarity with the Progressive Administration for putting up a man like Hollander as business agent. We hereby promise to give our fullest cooperation to the Progressive Administration.

Chairlady Lillian Blank
B. Fleesler — Jean Sierra
Herman Popkin — Haym Preisler

Coming to the Last Round-Up

Jobbing House of David Crystal Finally Signs With Union.—1500 Dressmakers Benefit

For many years the firm of David Crystal, Inc., one of the largest jobbers in the dress industry, had withstood the efforts of the Union to organize its workers. Even during our great victory of last August we did not succeed in adding it to our laurels. But we did not give up hope, nor did we slacken our efforts. And finally we have been successful. The Crystal firm is now abiding by the terms of the collective agreement.

David Crystal, Inc., has two shops of its own—one in Reading and the other in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. It maintains a large staff of cutters in New York and, in addition, provides work for 18 contractors. There are 1500 dressmakers working for Crystal directly or employed by the Crystal contractors.

Although most of the workers at the Reading shop were union members, the employers had consistently refused to sign any agreement with the Union.

After careful investigation the Union found out just which contractors worked for Crystal. Working slowly, organizing thoroughly, planning each step in the proceedings, a strike was called at an opportune time against the Crystal shops and the Crystal contractors.

So effective was our strike that after only one day Crystal conceded defeat. By joining the National Ass'n (jobbers), the dress house agreed to live up to the terms of the collective agreement and the strike was called off. The workers returned to their shops to receive union wages and to work union hours under union conditions.

Organization of Non-Union Dress Jobbers and Manufacturers Continues

The New York Joint Board of the Dress and Waist Makers' Unions is speeding the last round-up of the non-union shops. Through its Organization Department, C. Cherkes, Manager, a vigorous campaign is being waged against the few remaining non-union jobbers and manufacturers in its territory.

During the week of April 15-21, for example, ten such shops were completely organized. These are now union shops. Their workers are union workers, working under union conditions, and receiving union wages. And they work only thirty-five hours a week without any overtime.

These new union shops employ directly, or through their contractors, several thousand workers, all of whom will benefit by their newly acquired Union status. The shops include:

David Crystal, Inc., Hobby Dress, David H. Lowenthal, Pickfair Frocks, Rosefield Frocks, Sultan and Loventhal, Inc., Wallace and Schnittman, Inc., Avron Dress, Formal Dresses.

Good work, Brother Cherkes! More power to your efforts!

A Tale of Two Payrolls

The Story of a Strike—A First Lesson in Unionism

By JULIUS HOCHMAN, V.-P.
Gen. Mgr. N. Y. Dress Joint Board

On this page there is a story of two payrolls. They are payrolls from the same shop and for the same workers. Only they are dated one year apart. One is from April, 1933, the other is a payroll of March, 1934.

These payrolls tell a very dramatic and heroic story. First, the payroll of April, 1933. It is the payroll of a Connecticut dress contractor. The lowest amount received by any girl was $3.83. The girl worked thirty-four hours for that amount or at the rate of less than 11c an hour. the girl next to the head of the list received $7.93, but that was for two weeks, a total of 122 hours' work. She was paid at the rate of less than 7c an hour.

And the most any girl received, as you can see, was $10.34. That, too, was for two weeks' work. The highest amount any girl received per hour was 15c—$8.20 for a fifty-four and a half-hour week. What magnificent wages!

The other payroll shows higher wages. But we will come to that later. Girls weren't making such wages. There were thousands of girls working sixty, seventy and eighty hours a week who would have been overjoyed to earn as much as $5 per week. Wages of $3 and $2 were common. And there are numerous cases on record of girls earning as little as fifty, sixty and seventy cents a week.

The Case of Mary Savo

There is the celebrated case of Mary Savo who worked for the Yale Dress Co. and who was paid 65c for a week's work. On this page there is a picture of the check which she received and the factory in which she worked. Her case stirred the Governor of Connecticut to indignation and roused the wrath of all liberal, fair-minded persons. Such a shocking state of affairs had to be stopped. Freedom and liberty became terms of mockery when a girl could receive as little as 65c for a week's hard labor.

Even a complacent public, inured to stories of bad working conditions, had to take notice of such sweatshop slavery. Collier's ripped the lid off with a sensational story entitled "Robbing the Working Girl," in which Mary Savo's story, and the story of the whole wretched system were bared to an astounded public.

Other magazines took up the hue and cry and followed with their own stories. "The Cost of a $5 Dress," was the title of an article in the Survey Graphic. Delineator called its story the "Human Price of a Bargain." The Nation, New Republic, Literary Digest, protested against current conditions.

Investigations were under way. But the Union was not content to wait for reform from without. The workers, themselves, through their Union, were to lead the way to bettering their own conditions.

The "Gyp and Run" Artists

It was time for the workers to do away with the 'gyp and run' contractors whose trucks would roll into peaceful villages and towns with cut dresses and machines, there to hire an abandoned factory or loft and by nightfall have oilcloth signs flapping in the windows of the new firm, reading: OPERATORS WANTED. It was time to do away with contractors whose shops would be humming busily, grinding out dresses for New York jobbers and paid for by the very blood of the exploited workers. The whole system needed a radical overhauling.

The general strike of last August, the strike that paralyzed the industry and lasted until the bosses capitulated, was the Union's answer to the industrial slavery under which the workers labored.

It is almost a year now since the historic general strike of last August. We are all familiar with the story of that strike and with the glorious victory won by our Union for the dressmakers. And we all know of the strength of our Union, today, in the dress industry.

But it is only by looking backward and comparing present conditions with those existing before the strike, that we can measure our achievements. And so we come to an examination of the second payroll. The first payroll, the one we spoke of already at the top of this article; told us of wages and hours as they were a year ago. The second payroll, taken from the same shop and for the same workers, tells us of conditions as they are today.

A Little Figuring

The workers today put in no more than thirty-five hours a week and work only five days a week. There is no overtime. And for those thirty-five hours the lowest amount made by any of the girls is $22.37. That is at the rate of a little over 63c an hour. The largest amount any girl was paid was $37.78. And that is at the rate of $1.08 per hour.

A little figuring with pencil and paper indicates that as the result of the general strike which unionized the dress industry, these girls have won an average pay increase of over 600 per cent!

Today, in Connecticut, and this is a Connecticut shop whose figures we are studying—the minimum rate for operators is 63c an hour. Operators in Connecticut must make at least that much per hour, or $22.05 for a thirty-five hour week. And if any operator fails to receive those wages a complaint to the Union will set in motion machinery to secure for her the minimums to which she is entitled. The Union investigates all complaints promptly and fights for the workers' rights.

Today there is a minimum for every worker of a living wage as long as she is given work. The minimums range from 43c an hour for finishers to $1.00 per hour for operators on the better dresses in New York City.

There is still other security for the worker. Today, dressmakers are not dependent on the reliability of the contractor for their wages. The jobber shares a joint responsibility for the payment of labors' wages. The worker cannot be cheated by contractors who sneak away in the night or who seek to evade the payment of their debts by changing their firm titles from one fancy name to another. The jobber who provides the contractor with work is responsible for the contractor's workers receiving the minimums guaranteed them in the agreements.

Pay in Cash Only.

It is because of this and other guarantees, that the Union urges all workers who do not receive their weekly wages promptly, in cash, and for the full amount due up to two days before pay day, to report immediately. The Union will see to it that the workers collect every penny that is due them.

The terms of the collective agreements must be strictly adhered to. The Union lives up to its agreements and it is determined that the employers shall live up to theirs. It is a solemn duty of every worker to report every violation of the agreement on the part of any employer.

Machinery has been set up to handle all complaints. First a busines agent attempts a settlement by dealing with a representative of the employers' association. And if he is not successful, the complaint comes to the attention of the general manager of the Joint Board, who will press the claim before the Impartial Chairman, whose decision is final and must be adhered to by the bosses.

Every day, claims come before the impartial chairman and awards are made to the workers. Every day the Union wins for complaining workers minimums of which they have been defrauded. Every day the Union battles before the impartial chairman for the right of the worker to his job.

And because of the victory, because of our firm insistence on our rights, the lot of the worker is vastly different from the degraded conditions of a year ago.

The dressmakers today are assured of a NEW deal, of a SQUARE deal, because they have the strength of the Union behind them. Dressmakers have learned that their own best security lies in a powerful Union which will fight for their rights.

Sweatshop Gone

The sweatshop of last year has vanished. And with the sweatshop has gone the fifty and sixty, and seventy-hour week. And gone, too, is the 65c pay check. Today, those hours, those nickel and dime wages seem incredible. But it is best that we should not forget them. For they are reminders of our struggle upward.

The record lies open before us. And the tale of two payrolls is the tale of a truly heroic battle for the right of the worker to live in the sun.

The check issued to Mary Savo in payment for a week's work.

Educational Activities in Local 22

By WILL HERBERG
Educational Director Dressmakers Union Local 22, I.L.G.W.U.

It is now just a little over four months since Dressmakers' Union, Local 22, I.L.G.W.U., established its Educational Department and initiated a far-reaching program of educational work. True enough, the period of four months is a short one indeed from which to draw any reliable conclusions, but I feel that, since these months constitute the first term of our activity, so to speak, a brief review of what we have undertaken and accomplished would be useful to those interested in labor education.

Our Educational Department was established with the realization that the real strength of a union lies in the consciousness, loyalty and militancy of its membership. For Local 22, which had increased its membership manifold up to nearly 30,000 as a result of the general strike of August, 1933, the problem was an acute one. It primarily was a task of developing union-consciousness and loyalty among the thousands of new members, many almost entirely unacquainted with the labor movement and its traditions. The creation of leading groups of union-conscious and effective workers among these "new elements", workers having some understanding of the problems and tasks of the American labor movement and of their union, thus became one of our immediate aims.

Main Elements

As we laid out our plans originally, we strove to approach our objective from many angles. The main elements of our program for the first period consisted of:

1. Elementary classes in unionism to be given primarily in schools located in the residential districts.
2. Classes in English and public speaking, adapted to the needs and requirements of the union members.
3. More advanced classes in the theory and practise of unionism, in labor economics and problems, in labor history and American history generally, in the elements of social science, etc.
4. Occasional lectures, in series or individually.
5. Recreational and cultural groups and classes.
6. Dances, socials and entertainments of various sorts.
7. Publications of an educational and propaganda character, the spread of labor literature generally.

We can say with some satisfaction that, in the first four months, we were able to make considerable progress along each of these lines. Let us review briefly exactly what we were able to do in this period.

1. Six section schools were established in the residential districts. At each of these schools there were at least two classes, one in the elementary principles of unionism and the other in English. A number of the schools had other classes as well, history, more advanced English, etc. The term was eight weeks, although some English classes are continuing beyond this period.

Central School

2. A central school was organized at the Union headquarters. At this school there were nine classes—three English classes, one public speaking class, one American history and one labor history class, one in labor economics and prob-

lems and another in theory and practice of unionism and finally one in the essentials of social science. Here, too, the term was eight weeks, and here, too, the English and public speaking classes are continuing beyond the regular term. For the central school we made a particular effort to get especially well known and experienced teachers and merely to list some of them—Louis Hacker, David J. Saposs, Theresa Wolfson, Charles Sherman, George Marshall, Tom Tippett, Louis Stanley—will indicate how far we succeeded.

2. We have arranged a number of lectures in the past weeks. Our term began with six lectures, on "Labor and Education" held in the various residential districts. President Dubinsky of the I.L.G.W.U. spoke at a forum on the future of unionism in this country. George Schuller of New York University, lectured on the "money question." Towards the end of the first term we organized a series of lectures by Louis Stanley on unionism in American industry.

Chorus, Dramatics

4. Two dramatic groups (Jewish and English), two mandolin groups (a class for beginners and an orchestra for experienced players), and a brass band have now been organized for some time. In addition, we have just enlisted three gym classes (callisthenics, games, play, swimming, etc.), two for girls and one for men. Preparations are under way, too, for the organization of a chorus or perhaps of several such groups.

5. In this period two union dances have been arranged, one in Spanish Harlem and the other in the upper Harlem (English speaking) section. Many of our members went in groups to performances of "Peace on Earth," the anti-war play shown at the Civic Repertory Theatre, with free tickets supplied by the Educational Department.

Summing up: Sixteen section school classes, nine central school classes, eight recreational and cultural groups, with a total of individual attendance at all classes of about one thousand. The results have not been equal all around. Some schools were very successful; others hardly took hold. Attendance at classes varied from fifteen to a hundred. And, of course, the same applies to the teachers; most were very popular but there were some complaints, not always justified, set up about others. Our most successful institution, probably was the Spanish Harlem section school. Here we had large and enthusiastic classes and the effects of drawing a considerable number of Spanish dressmakers into the life and leadership of our Union are already visible.

Wasting Wealth and Life

A Trial, A Strike and A Reinstatement

The B. J. Costume Co. Finds New Excuse for Discharging Worker—Union Calls Protest Strike.—Employer Forced to Bow to Union

Madeline Quaglianti and Her Shop

Employers invent all kinds of reasons for discharging workers, but the most ingenious excuse was that offered by the B. J. Costume Company, of 525 Seventh Avenue, New York.

Madeline Quaglianti was employed for twelve years by the B. J. dress house. And then—without notice—she was discharged. The reason given by David Jacovitz, the employer, was that Madeline was a Nazi. There were mutterings from the girls with whom she worked. The boss was lying. It was ridiculous. They, her friends, knew better. What was there to be done about it except go to the Union and file a complaint?

The Union heard her story and a business agent took up the complaint with the association. The boss didn't want to reinstate her yet he wouldn't give any reason for her discharge except his original contention that she was a Nazi. The next step was to place the case before Impartial Chairman Adolph Feldblum.

The New York Dress Joint Board determined to fight for her reinstatement. The workers' privileges, written into the collective agreements, must be maintained. And sister Quaglianti had a right to her job until the boss was able to prove otherwise.

A Boss' Admission

And before Impartial Chairman Feldblum, the boss admitted that although he had known "the worker for twelve years he had never had anything against her until her remarks concerning the race came to my attention and I just could not tolerate that."

To offset his ambiguous and unsubstantiated testimony, appeared the friends and fellow-workers of the discharged girl, testifying to their belief in her innocence. It was also disclosed that Sister Quaglianti had been married to a Jew and that she had used her married name of Madeline Heyman when she first went to work for the B. J. Costume Co. Even following the death of her husband, she was still on very friendly terms with her Jewish sister-in-law.

Before the impartial chairman, Sister Quaglianti produced from her pocket a needlecase, the gift of her deceased husband, on which, inscribed in Hebrew, is the world "Jerusalem." And this she has always carried as a sacred keepsake. Strange keepsake for a Nazi!

"Surely," said Mr. Feldbuim, "all this is more than enough to offset the words of idle gossip and talk between the employers in the shop."

He also commented that the employer gave sister Quaglianti "no opportunity to face her accusers or to defend herself. I do not believe the representative of the Joint Board was entirely beyond the bounds of probability when he suggested the discharge was due to certain grievances voiced by this worker to the Union rather than to the reason given by her employer for her discharge.

"The complaint of the worker of unjust discharge is fully substantiated and she must be reinstated."

No Double Standard

Commenting on the chairman's decision, Mr. Hochman said that "It is entirely ridiculous to impute either to the Union or to Mr. Feldblum any anti-semitic sentiment, in insisting on the reinstatement of Miss Quaglianti. The Union has always abided by the rulings of the impartial chairman and it is determined that manufacturers, against whom there is an adverse ruling, must do the same."

Flouting the authority of the impartial chairman, the B. J. Costume Co. refused to reinstate Sister Quaglianti. The Union, determined to insist on protection for its members and the enforcement of the collective agreement, called a strike against the dress house. The workers responded in a body.

Machines stopped. The workers filed out. A picket line was formed. The strike was on. The Union thrust its full strength against a boss who broke his agreement. And because there is strength in unity, force to a militant labor organization, the Union won.

But while the workers were still on strike, a union investigation disclosed that a number of them had been working below the minimum scale. So the Union, before sending the workers back to the shop, collected $1,000 back pay for those workers who had not received their minimums. For refusing to comply with the decision of the impartial chairman and necessitating the calling of a strike, the B. J. Costume Co. paid $300 in liquidated damages.

This is a lesson in Union solidarity and illustrates the principle of one for all and all for one. This firm, we are sure, has had a costly lesson and will no more attempt, under fancy pretexts, to discharge workers. And if this employer or any employer fails to heed this lesson, the Union will be on the job.

Local 60 Busy As A Bee-Hive

By HERMAN SINGER

While the officers of the new Dress Pressers' Local, No. 60, are busily engaged in the daily routine of administering union affairs, I feel that the membership of our International should be made acquainted with the substantial work that is being accomplished by this very young local.

Local No. 60 was given a charter only a few weeks before the general dress strike last Summer, and already it has won for itself an enviable position in the labor movement of New York. How did this young local succeed in gaining in such a short time the loyalty and support of its membership?

One has only to visit the local offices or observe the various meetings, to find the answer. Here are some of the reasons:

A Clearing House for All

The local offices are open daily from 8:30 A.M. to 9 P.M., and often later than that; also, on Saturday till 2 or 3 P. M., and on holidays. Officers are on time and on the job, ready to do the work. The manager of Local No. 60 is one of the Dress Joint Board managers who goes out daily to attend personally to complaints. Shop meetings are attended to daily, and these cover not only members of Local No. 60, but also the pressers belonging to Local No. 89.

As a result of this practice and strict attention, the dress pressers, instead of bringing complaints to the Joint Board, where such complaints really belong, insist on coming with their complaints directly to the local. The consequence of this attitude is that the local office attends to 95 per cent of the pressers in the dress trade.

Besides, Local No. 60, as often as time allows, is calling regular membership meetings, in New York, in Brooklyn, and in Harlem, where Local No. 60 has acquired a colored membership which is constantly encouraged to activity. The Negro group is actively and constantly cooperating with the office, and they have delegates representing them on the executive board.

Our Negro Branch

Only recently did the Negro branch hold a dance in Harlem, where our colored members were addressed by President Dubinsky. Another dance and victory ball of Negro pressers, members of Local 60, was held in Brooklyn, where, until recently, the worst exploitation existed in the trade. These celebrations helped materially to cement the bond between the various groups in the local and to strengthen their attachment to the International.

The local, together with the Pressers' Club, which is loyally and vigilantly supporting the work of the administration, cooperates in the work of organizing lectures, choral singing, a pressers' branch of the Workmen's Circle, stimulating and developing dramatic talent, organizing an orchestra and issuing a periodical paper—"The Presser"—prepared, conducted and distributed by the pressers. The general tendency is to raise the membership mentally and culturally.

The ambition of Local No. 60 is to become the model local of our International.

. . The Ladies' Garment Workers Hall of Fame . .

By HARRY LANG

●

Among the inhabitants of a town in the Holy Land there is a little story which passes from generation to generation:—

Two gentiles, tailor a long journey were resting under a tree in Galilei.

Said one: "We are strangers here. We are resting in the shades of a tree we did not plant. . . ."

Answered the other, "Our thoughts are dedicated to the Creator of this tree above us and we are therefore no strangers here. . . . "

The first one spoke again: "When we walk our feet tear up the grass that was watered by the sweat of strangers. . . ."

The second one answered again: "The sight of the Creator of the grass under our feet is upon us and therefore we are not foreigners in this land. . . ."

In the distance there appeared the figure of an old man. He dragged his feet wearily through the sand. He was broken and bent by a heavy burden. He carried a pack on his shoulders. He drew near.

"Who are you and what is the pack on your shoulders?" asked the first mystic.

"I carry garments from town to town. I sew them myself." So answered the tired wanderer.

"Are you from Galilei?" queried the second mystic.

"If the sir means, whether I was born in Galilei, I must answer, 'No.'" Thus did the maker of garments with the pack on his shoulders quietly speak.

"Do you travel with thoughts dedicated to God?" asked the first mystic again.

"The pack on my shoulders is heavy; my mouth is dry from the heat; I think of rest and water," replied the desert tailor.

"You tread upon strange soil!.. called out both mystics.

"Strange?" repeated the desert tailor as he gazed upon them with wonder. "Strange?" he reiterated. And then he pointed. . . . "There is a stone, see! And here is another stone, see here! . . . And another stone is behind the tree underneath which you sit, see there . . . "

"What does that mean?" the two mystics demanded of him.

"Tombstones," he explained. "Once my wife and children would pass by here with me on our way from town to town. The difficult journey brought them to their death. Their graves lie under the stones before your eyes. . . ."

"The two mystics looked at one another. They understood what he had said and a thought came upon them like a flash of lightning: that the words of the wandering tailor was a message from God, a word for all future generations:

"Remember, ye men, for one who has left a grave, no matter where, the place is never strange. This land is his forever!"

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I heard this story while travelling last summer over the long stretches of Galilei, and was thinking how full of legend and history the land was for all faiths. And it was just there that I read the news about faraway America:—

"The International Ladies' Garment Workers Union made its appearance in Washington to obtain 'codes' which would insure a better livelihood for its members, and the event was indeed dramatic."

And the news continues:—

"President Dubinsky, an immigrant, spoke to America. Born and bred in old Russian-Poland, he took his place before the tribunal of American public opinion, which was sitting in judgment upon the economic order, and he demanded a 'New Deal' with a real basis. . . ."

On the paths of Galilei I wondered: Won't they reproach him in Washington with being "a stranger?" Will they not accuse him, as the mystics of Galilei accused the tailor in the desert, that he *is treading on stranger's soil!"* Was not "strangeness" thrown up to the leaders of the International many times?

But I also thought: Perhaps the immigrant David Dubinsky can bring the message of Galilei to Washington:—

"For one who has left a grave, no matter where, the place is never strange." The land is ours because we have many who have fallen on the hard journey. . . .

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In those moments when my thoughts turn back to bygone days, I think of the history of the International. Names swim to the top. Behind each name is a man whom I knew. And it seems to me that before my eyes there flutters a soul.

No more this one . . . no more that one . . . a passed generation . . . what has remained?

Only a restless voice remains, a voice which will not be quieted. And what does it say? It relates chapters of life.

This unrest, this is the characteristic strength of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. In it is an eternal restlessness which only immigrants can have.

The Jews, the Italians, the Spaniards—it is the soul of the immigrant, which is ever alive, ever demanding.

Explain it psychologically if you will. Longing for one's own soil and old homeland, which brings such sadness to the heart, is, at best, quieted by a constant striving for better standards of living in the new home. Or, one is apt to think of certain sentiments of nations and races, which are not always popular. Whether it be Jews or Negroes, they must always press forward, even fight, for recognition by the world. The fact remains that the International at its very birth was infiltrated with restless blood, and this unrest has remained with it even after its creators have passed away. . . .

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The names of two of its earliest creators, names of two picked from among the many:

Joseph Barondess; Herman Grossman.

What did they represent?

The simple life of men of the people.

A serene life which suddenly was disturbed by finding itself in a new world. Types taken from the first flood of Jewish immigration:

Barondess from Russia; Grossman from Austria.

One must remember these countries. They help explain the position of both men.

Barondess had personal magnetism. He was kind-hearted. Kindness of character was part of his nature. He expressed pity even to the point of breaking out into tears. His tall, masculine, massive figure, together with his sonorous voice which he knew how to control, called forth respect from all his listeners. In his speeches, he would introduce a story, or an example from everyday life, and then polish it with a quotation or an expression from the Talmud, all of which held cloakmakers under a spell. The Jewish workers were then not as spiritually developed as they are today. It is true that there were men among them who knew how to judge one's knowledge: many of them were intellectuals or semi-intellectual, "gentlemanly" youths in their homelands; and even these showed a distinct respect for a speaker in the labor movement who was able to employ biblical expressions. Most of the workers, however, were "ladies' tailors" from the old ghettos of Eastern Europe, and with them were many sorts of common "market men" who were not accustomed to work in shops, or as cutters, until they came to America. For them, Barondess was a personality to be deified. He was one of theirs because he had himself become a worker, yet they looked up to him because of his loftier spirit. As a Russian he represented the martyred Jew of Czarist Russia. None of this was true of Grossman.

An Austrian Jew did not have the same glamor for the general mass of immigrants that was possessed by the Russian. The Austrian Jew was not as persecuted as the Russian Jew. Nor could Grossman be the imposing figure on the platform that Barondess was. He lacked the orator's pathos just as he lacked general stage presence. He also did not possess the education of an intellectual, of a spiritually higher individual among the great mass. Yet he reached the position by dint of his ability to serve others, to find a job for a newcomer, to associate himself with the district leaders of the East Side for the purpose of freeing a striker or picket from an arrest.

Both names—Barondess and Grossman—come to us from the earliest strata of immigrant life, from the feelings of those under a strange sky; from the time when daring men, driven by need and by love of freedom, found new homes on American soil; from the pioneer period with its poverty and its dreams—heroes in the prologue to the International drama.

• • •

The drama developed constantly. New periods were passed in the march of time. Candles were lighted, candles of eternal light," for those who were gone. But even around them there is now a mist. The tombstones of other leaders call to us. Let us go on through the International Pantheon. There stands a whole row:

Benjamin Schlesinger, Morris Sigman, Meyer London, Morris Hillquit, Abraham Bisno, Isaac Hourwich, Abraham Baroff.

Every name—a book; all together—a mighty work; a mixture of characters and ideas; a confluence of many human streams.

Two of these, distinct spiritual forces, were always clashing—Schlesinger and Sigman.

The first, in appearance as well as personality, a Semite—dark skinned, oriental, thin, and quick; large eyes sympathetic enough to include the world; a bubbling, nervous energy; a personification of his people, who sweep over God's earth like a wind. The second, one of the same race, but from those strata which waged a war against the fiery oriental fantasy; one more inclined to study, to contemplation, to the fundamentalism of the fanatic; a man of religious determination not for the purpose of inciting the world but for the purpose of defending his own belief, indeed, ready to make the ultimate sacrifice for his faith.

One can better understand Schlesinger's type if one reads about the times of the war for the capture and domination of the tribes. Sigman's type finds its analogy in the figures of the middle ages who were ready to be burned "auto da fe" for their religion.

They needed and wanted one another, but they feared each other. Schlesinger did not always trust his own steps; his fantasy ran ahead of him; and he felt the necessity of having Sigman, the deliberate realist, at his side to check him, whether at his own union convention or at a conference with employers. At the same time, however, he feared that Sigman's weighty realism would be a burden on his shoulders. And the opposite was also true. Sigman was often downcast just because of his own deliberateness, his holy principledness, and he wanted Schlesinger near him, a power for action. Yet, he always feared that this motive power would carry him too far from his atmosphere, from the great mass of workers who were not yet ready to take bold steps. And Sigman loved this mass.

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The members of the International who surrounded both of these leaders belonged to a later generation of immigrants. The Jewish element was older and more experienced in worldly things before it came to America. The new type of Jew had already made attempts to break down the walls of the ghettos which imprisoned him in Eastern Europe. The Italian workers had had similar experiences before coming here. They came from that class of immigrants which had experienced hardships in Italy because of changes in their economic life and which had been driven by this need to uprisings and revolts. With such elements in the organization, the battle for leadership did not always revolve around personalities. Programs, principles, different attitudes towards union purposes were put forward. Industrial knowledge also played a role. The following random list of problems and controversial questions deserves consideration:

Large and small shops, jobber and contractor relations, the right to a job for every worker in the industry, work discipline, special protection for faithful union workers, rising and declining crafts because of changes in style, jurisdictional disputes among union locals, and questions of representation at joint boards and conventions, control over outgoing work from the inside shops and control over the number of machines in the outside shops, the measure of production, the value of wages in terms of higher living costs, piece-work and week-work, reasons for discharge, the recognition of labor's right to bring charges against employers in industrial judgments, the institution of "impartial chairman," arbitration or mediation in general industrial conflicts, external political forces derived from the social life of separate groups of members, collective contracts with manufacturers' associations and individual agreements with separate employers, centralization or decentralization.

The battle over these questions went on inside the organization just as the strikes went on in the streets. An analysis of Schlesinger's and Sigman's practices would entail an economic investigation as well as a psychologic study, including the different education of both types of leaders.

Schlesinger's earliest years spent in the poor life of Lithuania with its flat fields, sparse forests, and little streams, must certainly have made him yearn for a life in America with its colorful surroundings, for a life in a place where he could do things, where he could make himself prominent in the community. Ambition seethed in the young bodies of all the immigrant youth of his generation. Sigman, however, came here in the better years and his education as well as his parentage were derived from the fat fields of Bessarabia. A man of the village, with a healthy instinct for reality such as is possessed only by men who are close to life in the fields. It was there that the steps which he was to take in the

Code Enforcement Day by Day

By CHARLES H. GREEN
Director, Codes Observance Bureau
I.L.G.W.U.

Those employers in the garment industry who thought they could get away with chiseling have had a rude shock, and more such shocks are due. Following rapidly upon the announcement that the Government has prepared to enter into the enforcement phase of NRA and to prosecute violators of codes in the Federal Courts, a coat and suit manufacturer in Camden, New Jersey, who thought that the Code applied to the other fellow but not to him, was indicted and brought to court.

He pleaded guilty to a violation of the National Industrial Recovery Act. The judge fined him $500.

When Herman Saluk, of the Perfect Coat and Suit Co., appeared before the judge, he realized that the best thing he could do was to plead guilty, and throw himself upon the mercy of the court. He pleaded guilty on four counts having to do with wage underpayments, and five counts charging illegal overtime.

The judge was merciful, and fined him only $500 after Saluk promised to pay his workers $1,093 back pay which he had chiseled out of their pay envelopes by keeping a false set of books.

The case of Saluk was prepared by the Coat and Suit Code Authority.

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The Government's decision to go after code violators hard came after countless complaints that the NRA lacked teeth. Now it's showing its teeth! Two other cases that came before the federal courts are of interest to members of the International because they have to do with overtime violations, and they show how the federal courts are disposed to regard such violations.

NRA officials have been pretty strict about restitution for wage underpayments right from the start. But on overtime violations and other types of violations of codes, they did not take a similar definite stand. If, as is likely, they were reluctant to take a stand because there were no precedents to go by, the action of the courts in the cloak case and the two textile finishing cases which are noted below, will probably have the effect of removing this reluctance.

Code Authorities, too, may be expected to take a stronger stand against illegal overtime as a result of these decisions.

The first of these encouraging cases was in Greenville, S. C. There one Greenville Finishing Co., a cotton finishing and printing firm, was fined $1,500 for working overtime for three days, or at the rate of $500 a day, which is the maximum provided by law, following a plea of guilty.

In Paterson, N. J. the Radiance Piece Dye Works, a $25,000,000 concern, worked some of its employees eleven or twelve hours a day, whereas the Code limit is eight hours per day. The firm was fined $750 after pleading guilty, the small amount of the fine being conditioned on the firm's promise to live up to the Code in the future.

The Federal Judge in the Paterson case told the firm, "Your concern is now labeled as a violator of the Federal statutes, and a repetition will not bring such cooperative action from the Government, not such leniency from the court. So go hence and sin no more."

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Many millions of dollars have been collected in restitution, according to NRA officials. And one is pretty safe in guessing that an overwhelming proportion of these restitutions have been secured where labor is organized or where the workers have made a beginning at organization. It's perfectly true that there aren't any figures available to prove this, and I doubt whether such figures will ever be made available. But talks with enforcement officers of various Codes Authorities convince me that the guess is a good one.

The reason: The unorganized worker is afraid to make a complaint. Despite the fact that his identity is not made known by the Government, he fears that he will be fired, if his boss discovers that he is the complainant. And there will be nobody to take his part.

The worker who is a member of a union does not share this fear. He knows that the employer will not dare to discriminate against him, because the union is right there to back him up.

So, under the Codes, the union worker's wages are protected two ways. In the first place, the employer is not likely to chisel on wages because the union is ready to step in and make him pay up without waiting for the Government. And when for one reason or another the union [illegible] enforcement agencies [illegible] to protect the worker's rights, it can do so effectively because the worker need not fear to make a complaint.

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In the cloak industry, for example, the workers generally are so strongly organized that few wage complaints concerning union shops come before the Code Authority.

But the few non-union shops in the industry don't even pay Code wages. However, they are learning that they can't get away with it. The Coat and Suit Code Authority has already collected about $50,000 in back wages for distribution to the workers. By the time these lines are printed this sum will probably be doubled.

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The Dress Code Authority some weeks ago set up regional enforcement agencies, and these have already begun to function. At recent meetings of the Out-of-Town Committee of the Code Authority, attended by President Dubinsky, Vice-President Bialis, and the writer, a report was made covering the activities of these agencies.

The report showed that in Boston seventy-five complaints have been received, seventeen hearings conducted, back pay ordered in two cases, one warning issued, two complaints dismissed, and decision reserved in two cases. Up to May 2, $2,046 had been ordered paid to workers in restitution for wages underpayments.

In Philadelphia four hearings were conducted, and two complaints ordered to be investigated further, one dismissed, and one decision reserved.

In Cleveland, where the agency was not set up until the latter part of April, sixteen complaints were received, five were partially investigated, and back pay was ordered in one case.

In Chicago, fifty-eight hearings were conducted. Thirty warnings were issued, sixteen cases were dismissed, and decision was reserved on fourteen.

In St. Louis, twenty-six hearings were conducted, back pay was ordered in one case, twenty-two cases were dismissed, and decision was reserved on two.

In Los Angeles, four hearings were conducted, small sums ordered as restitution in five shops, and one warning was issued.

In San Francisco, four hearings were held, one warning was issued, and one employer ordered to make restitution.

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In New York the firm of Pinehurst Frocks was ordered to make restitution in the sum of $3,044. In addition, it was required to pay $391 for the expenses of the Dress Code Authority in conducting the investigation.

Other hearings have been held on complaints against twenty-eight manufacturers, with total payments for restitution amounting to $4,047. A number of other cases involving substantial underpayments of wages are pending.

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While many wage complaints have been handled by local offices, several have passed through the Codes Enforcement Bureau at the International. Here every safeguard was taken to make sure that in any way. Representatives may not be the names of the workers making the complaint will never be revealed. Affidavits setting forth the violations, have been prepared with the assistance of this office, which then followed through on cases until the end.

Thus far, the largest amount of wage underpayment established by this office was one for $26,000 in a Pennsylvania dress shop. The Dress Code Authority, starting on the basis of the affidavits prepared in this office, was able to build up a perfect case against the firm, which was forced to admit the wage underpayments.

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Other types of complaint pass through this office also. One is particularly interesting, and is worth telling about here, even though for obvious reasons no names can be used at this time. In a Southern city an enforcement officer for a Code Authority which is in many quarters considered hostile to labor unions conducted himself in such a manner as to cause employers to believe that union shops would be discriminated against by the Code Authority. This office was informed of the occurrence at once by the head of the union in that city. Following a personal interview with the head of that Code Authority, he was told that the International won't stand for that kind of business. It was made plain to him that the Union was ready to fight the battle through the press, the courts, and the highest officials of the NRA. He saw that the Union meant exactly what it said, promised that such action would not be repeated, and took steps to repair what damage had already been done the union shops by his investigator.

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This type of trouble is very rare, however. It takes Code Authority officials and NRA officials generally a very short time to realize that their best ally in enforcing the Codes is the union. They learn to recognize very quickly that the union is ready to go to any lengths against the Code violator, and as a result they frequently call upon this office for cooperation in working up a case against a chiseler.

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Even the workers in the unorganized branches of the industry are the beneficiaries of the union's strength. For example, at the hearings on Coat and Suit amendments in Washington last month, President Dubinsky made a stern demand for enforcement of the Code so far as it affected non-manufacturing employees, such as shipping clerks, despite the fact that the union has no shipping clerks as members.

Following the agreement reached in the automobile industry on the question of collective bargaining, considerable confusion was evident in various parts of the country as to the status of a union when it has been chosen by a majority vote of the workers as their collective bargaining agency. This confusion is cleared up in a statement of principles issued by the National Labor Board *after* the automobile settlement. The statement is: "The representatives selected by the majority of the employees within a given plant or department, are the sole collective bargaining agency for the plant or department."

Another significant statement of principle laid down by the National Labor Board makes it perfectly clear that workers have the right in an election to choose a union (rather than individuals) as their collective bargaining agency. The statement is: "The employees may select a representative whom they choose as their agents for the purpose of collective bargaining. The employer may not restrict their right of free choice restricted to fellow employees. Since the word 'representatives' in Section 7 (a) is used in its generic sense, employees may select a union as their representative."

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great industrial cities of America were measured.

It is also very interesting, very strange, to see how each of these men in his turn chose a legal adviser for the organization. The temperamental Schlesinger always had at his side the deliberate Morris Hillquit. The contemplative Sigman, cold and hard as steel, was always attracted by the fiery Meyer London.

Their tombstones stand together and they tell us so much.

Hillquit near Schlesinger—calculation and logic for a man who wanted to be daring; London with Sigman—a soul of fire for a character of steel.

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But before their period was ended, it was influenced by others. There is the chapter of Dr. Isaac Hourwich with his reputation as a statesman, an economist, a publicist, compromising in his theoretical speculations but stubborn to the point of fanaticism in his practical actions, and right next to it is the chapter of Abraham Bisno, with his philosophic consideration of the facts on one side of the case and his constant warning against dangers on the other side.

I will not pause over those sections of the International drama which are presented through heroic roles of men who are still alive, who still breath our air, who philosophize about ideas somewhere in the streets which are surrounded by those modern pyramids, the garment buildings. I have merely considered those whom time took from us. There has remained naught of them but a memory, a date: lived in such and such a time and died at such and such a time. And in the midst of these monuments there burns a little candle over an epitaph which reads—"Here lies Abraham Baroff."

This was the Baroff who was as full of feeling as an artist, an intellectual devoted to the masses, whether it was in the revolt of the workers in 1909 when he was a light-haired young man, or when his hair had become white as the snow which covers his grave in winter. He always appeared to me as a figure who went about with a lantern in his hand to find needy people deserving of help. Only in the naive little towns and villages of all nations can one find such types: the village doctor, the village poet, the village pastor. Thus did Baroff go from local to local.

A walk through the International Pantheon with its lighted candles near each name kindles the heart and the mind. The generation which leads the International today can turn proudly to America and say:

"This land is ours: this place belongs to us; our blood is in it!"

A Year of New York Cloak Union History

By LOUIS E. LANGER
Secretary of Joint Board Cloakmakers Union of New York

The Joint Board had a tradition of reviewing its activities from one convention to another. Thereby the Joint Board served to acquaint the convention delegates from other states with the life and activities of the New York Cloakmakers' Union and its effect upon society.

These reports contained a review not only of the many trade problems which the Joint Board meets and for which it must find a fit solution but also of various internal organizational problems which often provoked important differences of opinion and which had, therefore, to be handled very carefully.

During these last years, this tradition had been discarded for many reasons and the Joint Board stopped giving its biennial reviews. To make a thoroughgoing review of the activities of the Joint Board during the last few years is really impossible, for in order to do it one must have himself participated in these activities. Inasmuch as the writer of this article is a new officer, he has not experienced these activities himself, and is, consequently, unable to present the New York Joint Board to the delegates of other states in the traditional manner.

Structure Changes

The celebration of our 35th Year Jubilee Convention would not be complete, however, without a review of the rich occurences and experiences of the New York Joint Board during the last two years. For this reason I shall merely give an account of our colossal Joint Board apparatus, how it functions and how it is directed under the management of Brother Nagler with the cooperation of the entire Joint Board staff under the present Code and collective agreements.

Because of the Code, on the one hand, and the collective agreements, on the other, great changes have taken place. Not only have these two instruments changed our methods of procedure with the employer's association but they have also, quite naturally, changed the structure and the functions of our complicated organizational apparatus. The modifications in our organizational apparatus have been called forth mainly by the following points:

1. The old-new production system.
2. The limitation of contractors.
3. The 35-hour work-week.

The first point is complicated and very important. It deals with the fundamental issue—the worker's earnings—the chief question in his life. In order to carry through this change in the system of production so that the livelihood of the cloakmaker shall be insured, in practise as well as in theory, we had to make fundamental changes in our methods of controlling and protecting the worker's income. Under the system of week-work the wages of each type of worker were determined beforehand and the Union merely had the task of seeing to it that each worker got his wage. Where a worker did not get the proper wage, either because of his weak character or because of the employer's greed, the Union demanded the proper wage for the individual through the association and the case was settled.

Price Settlements

With the introduction of piece-work, the Union had to install a new apparatus to handle the complicated problem of settling prices for every piece of work so that the worker could enjoy the fruits of labor according to the Code and the agreement.

In order that workers be not cheated in the settlement of prices as well as to conduct a uniform control over prices for labor so that workers of one contractor shall not be able to compete with those of another, our agreement states that all prices must be settled directly with each jobber, or manufacturer, and the same prices must be paid in all shops which work for the same firm. All prices must be settled by price experts representing the Union and the employers in the presence and with the cooperation of "joint" price committees which represent the workers of all the shops and of the individual jobbers or manufacturers.

Immediately after the last general stoppage, no special difficulties were forthcoming in regard to price settlements. The employers, being forced to make their first orders as quickly as possible, pursued a policy of price settlement that placed very few difficulties in our way. With this class of jobbers and manufacturers the exhausted workers had an opportunity to draw a breath. But this "prosperity" continued for only a few weeks. As soon as the first orders were made and the time came for settling prices on the newly arrived styles, the employers became stubborn and the settlement of prices took on its old hard sour features. Their argument was that the workers had raised prices so high because of their first settlements that it was impossible for them to meet the competition of other markets. One can honestly say that this excuse was unfounded. They also argued that the method used for settlement of prices did not result in uniformity since, it was shown, the prices in some houses were lower than in other houses making the same line of work. This complaint was, to some degree, justified. It is self-evident, however, that these irregularities were due to the fact that each group of price adjusters appraised the value of the garments according to their personal judgments and not in accordance with the needs of the trade.

The Labor Bureau

This condition, together with the decision of the Union forbidding work on unsettled garments caused the workers as well as the employers much loss of time. The employers called the attention of the impartial chairman to the situation which had developed.

The impartial chairman, seeing that these complaints were partially justified, called several conferences of all parties concerned after which he established a labor bureau under his personal supervision, in accordance with the collective agreement.

The interested parties showed the newly created institution how to go about its work; merely:—

1. It should classify and group all the jobbers and manufacturers according to the lines of work they produce.

2. It should thoroughly study every type of garment, every line of work, and work out a standard for the various "body grades", calculating every part and every grade of work which is demanded by each garment in each craft, and determine the price for every part of work according to the necessary labor time. The price for all extras, outside of the standard body, shall be left to the appraisal of the price experts.

3. It should settle all disputes over the established grades or over extras, in case the price experts should fail to agree in any case.

At the beginning of last season the labor bureau finished the first two parts of its task. It established 6 body grades for coats and 4 grades for suits, with definite prices for every craft according to the established grades. The impartial chairman ratified the classification as well as the established prices and the same were then ratified by the Union and the associations involved.

In order to bring uniformity into the prices that were settled upon in the case of each separate jobber and manufacturer, the Union introduced a central adjustment department to settle prices for the entire industry. This department divided the price adjusters into various groups, representing every craft, according to the class of work in which they were most highly specialized. Each one of these groups was to settle prices for that line of work according to the aforementioned classification. In this way we hoped to introduce uniformity in the settlement of prices.

Obstacles Met

Theoretically, it sounded beautiful. But in practice, the Union met new obstacles in the settlement of prices. Practically every manufacturer demanded that his garments be settled in terms of a lower grade than the samples that were made. Their argument was that the orders would be made in accordance with the cheaper grades and not similar to the samples. This led to new complications which caused a further delay in production from which both sides suffered. Ways had to be found which would not disturb the process of production so that the workers would not have to risk their earnings. The representatives of the Union and of the associations united on the following temporary arrangements, as a test:

"The adjusters should proceed with the settlement of prices on the basis of the established grades. If they cannot agree about the determination of grades for various garments then the workers should be allowed to make the particular garment and the adjusters shall continue making a settlement. In case they are unable to agree in the course of a week from the day upon which the Union issues an official demand for an arrangement, then the dispute shall be referred to the Labor Bureau, which shall make its decision within a week. In case no such decision is issued within the proper time, the workers are not to continue with the work."

This agreement gave the workers an opportunity to continue with their work without risking their earnings. It shortly became clear, however, that in many shops, especially among contractors, the workers did not earn the wages they expected according to the settled prices. Investigating the reason for it, the Union representatives discovered that the employers were cheating the workers on the grade of work. Instead of making their orders in accordance with the grades which they had submitted to the price settlement, the employers demanded of their workers the higher grade of labor as in the samples.

Direct Settling

The representatives of the Union who control the shops, since they had not taken part in the settlement of the prices, were not able to decide immediately the true facts about the settlement of the garment. And therefore a thorough investigation became necessary in every one of these cases. The Union then realized that the plan for a separate adjustment department had not worked out in favor of the workers, because instead of improving the situation it had created new difficulties for the workers. The Union, therefore, decided that in order to avoid further complications the prices must be settled by those who have direct control and general supervision over the shops. This would give the representatives of the Union the opportunity to acquaint themselves in each instance with the conditions under which the adjusters settled the prices.

Arriving at this conclusion, the Union

Who'll Pull the Trigger?

immediately dissolved the central adjustment department, and transferred this function to that department which has the general supervision and control over the various shops. In this manner, there was introduced an amendment in the method of settling prices according to which the earnings of the workers are insured.

Slack Time

On the question of limitation of contractors, our Union conducted a vigorous battle even before the Code was adopted. Brother Nagler argued then that this point is so intimately interwoven with the question of price settlement that they could not be torn apart. He pointed out that without a limitation of the number of contractors which a jobber or manufacturer is justified in employing in accordance with his production it would be impossible to maintain our established "wage standards." In the settlement of prices we first realized how correct was the contention of Brother Nagler that both points were so closely connected that they might honestly be called twins.

Several of the manufacturers found it impossible to accustom themselves to the thought that the workers were going to make a decent livelihood and they sought to cut down the wage standards which were agreed upon. But the method of settling prices through experts and mutual committees ended this way. Deprived of this opportunity to cheat the worker, they began to use different means. They manufactured an artificial slack in their contracting shops, hoping that by withholding work they would force the hungry workers to lower the prices. But when this method also failed, they began to send their work to unregistered contractors and thereby created competition between one contractor and another, a competition which would have ultimately victimized the workers. The Union, however, learned about this and brought charges against the employers before the Code Authority on the ground that they were violating that point of the Code which states definitely that "no jobber or manufacturer may send his work to any but registered contractors." The point also states "that the jobber or manufacturer must divide his work justly among all his contractors." The Code Authority took the correct position in this matter and severely punished every firm which was found guilty of violating this point.

Schemes Defeated

Seeing that this was a devil's game, that none of the attempted schemes was successful, certain jobbers and manufacturers decided to liberate themselves entirely from the control of the Union and the Code Authority and become free factors, as in the "good old days." They resigned from their association and incorporated their firms to avoid judicial prosecution for violations of the agreement. They opened shops in cities outside of New York and procured a temporary injunction preventing the Union, the Code Authority, the NRA, and all other parties from forcing the conditions of the Code and collective agreement upon them.

But they were quickly convinced that they made an error even in this calculation. The Code Authority denied the NRA label on the ground that their garments were not being made under the conditions of the Code. Inasmuch as they could not manufacture cloaks without this label and since the large department stores refused to purchase their wares, this group of employers was forced to take a different attitude, realizing that the injunction would not manufacture and sell their cloaks.

Meanwhile, the Union procured a temporary injunction against one of the most outstanding employers of this group, preventing him from denying his registered contractors in New York, since according to the collective agreement every association as well as every individual member of the association is responsible for every point of the collective agreement and the Code until the agreement expires.

At first this firm sought to fight the Union's injunction. Seeing, however, that the law itself hated sweatshops and sweatshop conditions and that justice must finally be victorious, this firm accepted the injunction until the end of its term and immediately agreed to restore the code and agreement conditions in all its shops.

This victory had its effect upon the local cloak market and encouraged the Union to continue the same action against the other firms which belong to the same group.

The 35-Hour Work-Week

The 35-hour work-week is the third important point in our Code and collective agreement. It is therefore self-evident that the Union had to devote itself to the enforcement of this point with the same energy that it displayed in the first two points. It is an accepted economic law that an organized short work-week raises the living standards in every industry, especially in a well organized industry. The Joint Board, therefore, immediately set to work to put this point into practise, since it so deeply affects the workers' welfare.

When the crisis was on and the Union was thereby considerably awakened, many employers violated the hours of labor and among certain employers there developed a habit of smuggling in a few extra hours in the course of the week. With the acceptance of the Code, the Union decided to uproot this dangerous habit under all conditions so that the 35-hour work-week should become a fact and not merely a paper statement.

For this purpose, the Joint Board introduced a special control department, composed of many active members from all affiliated locals, whose job it was to see to it that the shops did not work during illegal hours.

Special Control Dept.

The work of this department progresses along the following lines:

The supervisor of the control department decides upon a patrol committee with a chairman for each building which contains cloak shops. The building committees of all the buildings on each block compose the block committee. The building chairmen and their committees are, by and for themselves, little links in a large chain in the great apparatus which the Union has created to enforce hours of work. These committees visit all the shops under their jurisdiction, and where they meet workers who are laboring during illegal hours, they stop the work.

This patrol system has a great effect upon the industry in general. A correct evaluation of this effect can be seen when one looks through the records of the Joint Board Grievance Committee. The first thing that strikes one's eye is the very small number of such instances which really take place in comparison with the great number that took place before the last general stoppage. The second important fact which demands attention is that instead of the great number of complete shops which took part in these violations there are now only [illegible] and there who, because of their weak character, cannot refuse the boss. It is seldom that one meets with a whole shop that is working illegal hours. This shows the great influence that the Union has over its members, thanks to the energetic activity of our control committee.

Here you have a picture of the most important sections of the activity and effect of our complicated and highly specialized apparatus which the Joint Board must employ to maintain the conditions which we have gained under the Code and collective agreement.

At the Helm

To control this giant apparatus which, because of organizational reasons, must be made up of people with various ideas about union questions and policies and who cannot be handled as automatons, required a person of exceptional ability, strong character and inexhaustible energy. It may often happen that no matter how strong and energetic such a person may be, the apparatus may, for one reason or another, be damaged so as to injure our members. One must remember that our Union does not only operate under a collective agreement but also under a legal code which is created by the federal government. To see to it that these two instrumentalities, which must solve the various problems which the industry faces, be, from time to time, brought into harmony and to see to it that the technical contradictions in the Code and collective agreement be reconciled, require a person of great experience and clarity of mind.

The gigantic task of employing this colossal apparatus in such a manner that the membership shall enjoy the full benefit of our gains under the Code and the present collective agreement is the function of the general manager, Brother Nagler, the present leader of the Joint Board of the New York Cloakmakers' Unions.

We merely want to add that the most difficult job was the introduction and establishment of this colossal apparatus and its erection on a working basis. Brother Nagler has carried this through with the greatest accuracy, for which he deserves the fullest credit.

St. Peter and the Scab

St. Peter stood guard at the Golden Gate,
With solemn mien and air sedate,
When up at the top of the Golden Stair,
A shrouded figure ascended there.
Applied for admission, he came and stood
Before St. Peter, so great and good,
In hope the City of Peace to win
And asked St. Peter to let him in.

"Oh, thou who guardest the Gate," said he,
"I have come hither, beseeching thee
To let me enter the Heavenly Land
And play a harp in the angel hand.
Of me, St. Peter, there is no doubt,
There is nothing from Heaven to bar me out;
I have been to meetings three times a week
And almost always I would rise to speak".

"I have told the sinners about the day
When they would repent of their evil way.
I have told my neighbors—I have told them all—
Of Adam and Eve and the Primal Fall.
I have talked to them loud; I have talked to them long,
For my lungs are good and my voice is strong.
I have marked their path of duty clear,
And laid out the plan of their whole career.
So, good St. Peter, you will clearly see
That the Gate of Heaven is open to me.
Here is the company letter of recommend,
Which I hope you will read before you send
For the Angel guide to the Throne of Grace—
It might gain for me a higher place.
You will find I was always content to live
On whatever the company cared to give
And I ought to get a larger reward
For never owning a Union card.
I have never grumbled; I have never struck.
I have never mixed with Union truck,
But I must be going my way to win.
So open, St. Peter, and let me in.

St. Peter sat and stroked his staff.
Despite his high office he had to laugh.
Said he with a fiery gleam in his eye,
"Who is tending this gate, Sir, you or I?
I have heard of you and your gift of gab,
You are what is known on earth as a scab."
Thereupon he rose in his stature tall
And pressed a button upon the wall,
And said to the Imp who answered the bell:
"Escort this fellow around to hell.

"Tell Satan to give him a seat alone
On a red-hot griddle up near the throne;
But, say, the Devil can't stand the smell
Of a cooking scab on a griddle in hell.
It would cause a revolt and a strike, I know,
If I sent you down to him below.
So back to your master on earth, and tell
That they don't even want a scab in Hell!"

CRAWFORD GOYNES.
—A Kansas City Member.

NRA Garment Label Makes Needlework History

By BESSIE BEATTY

Socially conscious men and women who are aware that unfair finery is sad plumage have long advocated a label to distinguish clothes made without undue cost to workers.

Until the lusty blue eagle of the NRA came into the needlework industry, all attempts to effectuate such a label had been abortive. The Prosanis label, to symbolize healthful, clean, safe, fair working conditions and standards, issued by the Joint Board of Sanitary Control in 1926, had the backing of the National Consumers' League, the Women's Trade Union League, and many other groups of nation-wide importance.

But the label, despite the good will behind it, failed because voluntary efforts to maintain higher labor standards went down to defeat before cut-throat competition. The label was not mandatory. Its sponsors were unable to create sufficiently wide consumer backing for it, and had no other means of enforcing it.

Eagle Family Grows

The NRA garment label came into the picture under fairer auspices. Since Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt inaugurated its use by sewing the first label of the Coat and Suit Code Authority into her winter coat on last October ninth, the eagle family has increased and multiplied beyond the wondest hopes of its progenitors. It is proving the impossible, possible. It is providing not only the banner, but the sinews of war, for an effective fight against the sweatshop, and in favor of fair wages, a short work-day, and decent sanitary conditions.

The NRA garment label is succeeding when other attempts at labelling have failed, for a number of reasons. It came at the psychological moment. We were all becoming increasingly aware that to gain a decent mode of living for ourselves we must help others to gain a decent mode of living for themselves. We were discovering the fact that selling power and buying power are the reverse sides of the same dollar, that you can't have your selling power unless you have buying power.

Manufacturers, workers and consumers had all learned something from the devastating fight for markets and jobs that marked the fierce competition of the depression.

Manufacturers with the will to be fair to their employees were finding themselves unable to compete with ruthless price-cutting. Workers, driven by need to accept any terms to keep themselves and their families off the breadlines, were fighting a losing fight. Even those consumers who belonged to neither group were beginning to realize that there is a social and an anti-social price for everything.

Anti-Social Price

The sweatshop wage is an anti-social price. The sweatshop drags down all standards. Eviction, poverty, hungry children crying for bread, charity, disease, delinquency—they make a familiar sequel to the story of workers in all industries, a costly sequel for which the whole social order must pay.

The first job of the code makers was to determine the social price in any given industry, and set about devising ways to put it into effect. The NRA label was devised as a badge of honor on all clothes made in conformity with this price.

The eagle in the needlework industry s broad wings to shelter all who conform to the newly established ideas. But the eagle has claws too. The label provides the money to enforce the codes in the garment industry. Compliance is backed by expert watchfulness. The Coat and Suit Code has set up, (and other codes are following its example), a comprehensive system [illegible] enforcement. Unless code regulations are enforced by each Code Authority, and each branch of that Code Authority, the National Recovery Act becomes a scrap of paper—it means nothing.

The label is issued only to those who sign a certificate of compliance. Investigation of factories and records follow. Men familiar with the needlework industry, the normal output of workers, the capacity of machines, the payroll systems, are alert for the slightest semblance of violation. They guard the label jealously. Unless it is so guarded it could very easily cease to be a badge of honor and become a racket.

Labels bear the insignia of each manufacturer, and a serial number. They are kept in vaults, and to make the check more effective, a supply is issued for only two weeks at a time.

National Committee Formed

When a violation is discovered in any given factory, the supply of labels is stopped until the manufacturer has made full restitution to the worker of any shortage in wages, and has demonstrated his intention of observing the letter and spirit of the code.

Enforcement does not stop at the factory exit. Shoppers follow the garments into the retail market. They inspect the garments offered for sale in the shops. When they find garments that are incorrectly labeled, or unlabeled, they check with the store executive and trace them back to their source.

To make the case for the label finally complete by giving it consumer backing, we have organized a national garment label campaign, with a women's advisory committee headed by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, and composed of representatives of the leading women's organizations. The campaign is being conducted by the General Federation of Women's Clubs, Consumers Advisory Board of the NRA, National Council of Women of the United States, National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, National League of Women Voters, National Women's Democratic Committee, National Council of Jewish Women, National Women's Trade Union League, National Consumers League, Women's City Club of New York, Junior League, National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church, International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, and the Young Women's Christian Association.

Those Who Help

Well known women who are serving on the advisory and publication committees include Mrs. Grace Morrison Poole, Mrs. Charles Cary Rumsey, Miss Lena Madesin Phillips, Mrs. Gelene MacDonald Bowman, Miss Katherine Ludington, Miss Mary Anderson, Miss Mary W. Dewson, Mrs. Mary G. Schonberg, Mrs. Daniel O'Day, Miss Mary Dreier, Miss Lucy R. Mason, Mrs. Edward L. Dreier, Miss Cecilia Razovsky, Mrs. Noel Sargent, Mrs. John D. [illegible], Dr. Mrs. T. [illegible] Wade, Miss Emma Dot Partridge, Miss Fannia Cohn, Miss Elsie D. Harper, Miss Helen Rockey, Miss Nancy Cook, Mrs. Myra Blakeslee, Inez Haynes Irwin, Fannie Hurst, Miss Frances McKee, Miss Helen Walker, Miss Marjorie Schuler, Mrs. Charles A. Lindley, Mrs. Lois Pierce Hughes, Miss Mildred Adams, Miss Jeanette Eaton, I. A. R. Wylie, Alice Hughes, Gretta Palmer, Emma Bugbee, and Sally Hitchcock.

Though this campaign was launched by the Coat and Suit Code Authority, it has done much work on behalf of all the labels, and a movement to broaden the scope of the work with all the garment codes cooperating has been launched under the Garment Codes Council. Already there have been nine radio broadcasts promoting the label, and articles in magazines of national circulation, including Pictorial Review, The American Girl Magazine, The Guardian, The Independent Woman, The Woman's Press, The Book Shelf, and The National Junior League Magazine.

Label at Fashion Shows

Three events for featuring the label which created wide interest were fashion shows at the Women's City Club, the American Woman's Association, and the League of Women Voters, with labeled coats, suits, dresses and hats on display. In each instance the fashion show was preceded by a talk on the history of the garment industry.

Thousands of pamphlets explaining the meaning of the label have been distributed to key people all over the country, and to speakers for various organizations who are advocating the label in their programs.

Each code has its own label. All are similar, but no two identical. All women's, misses', children's and infants' coats, suits, jackets, ensembles, capes, wraps and riding habits should bear the white satin label of the Coat and Suit Code Authority attached on the inside of the right front where the lining joins the facing at the waistline. If that label is missing from any garment in these categories, it is safe to assume that the garment was made under sub-standard conditions of industry.

All dresses of whatever material, except knitted dresses which are under the Knitted Outerwear Code and cotton dresses sold below $3.75, bear the label of the Dress Code Authority sewn on the inside of the dress at the waistline, on the left-hand side.

All woolen clothing for men and boys, including apparel made by custom tailors, should bear the label of the Men's Clothing Code Authority. Palm Beach suits also come in this category.

All knitted outerwear including sweaters, knitted bathing apparel, sports wear, knitted headwear, etc., is required to have the label of the Knitted Outerwear Code Authority.

The Millinery Code's label should appear in all feminine headgear, whether it is made of straw, fabric, felt or any other material.

All blouses and skirts are labeled.

Corsets and brassieres of all types are labeled by the Corset and Brassiere Code Authority.

The Cotton Garment Code controls the manufacture of fourteen different types of wearing apparel, including cotton wash dresses, nurses' and maids' aprons and uniforms, washable service apparel, aprons, coats, etc., men's and boys' shirts, blouses, pajamas, nightshirts, work clothes, (overalls, etc.) Even men's collars come under the Code.

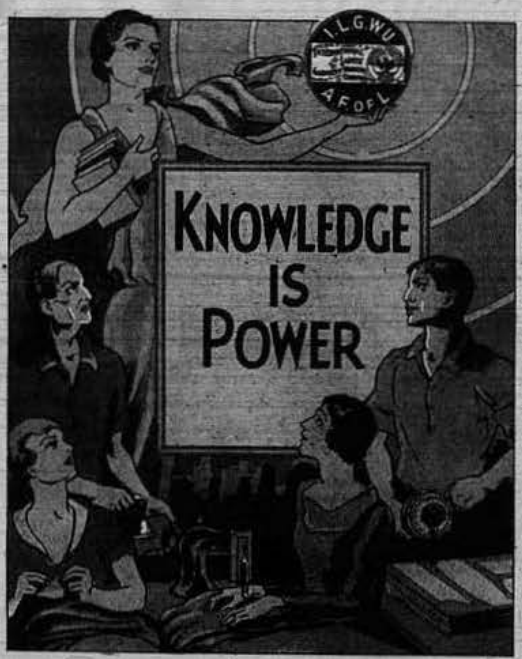
Badge of Honor

Smoking jackets, lounge suits, house coats, cocktail coats, dressing gowns, bath and beach robes are controlled by the Robe and Allied Products Code Authority.

It is not possible to over-emphasize the importance of these labels. The label is of vital importance to the manufacturer who desires to preserve decent standards in his industry, because without it he may easily become a victim of the competition of the sweatshop operator.

It is of importance to the retailer be-

Symbol for Workers' Education



An artist, at the request of our Educational Department, prepared a special drawing symbolizing workers' education. This will be used on posters that will be displayed in all our locals throughout the country. This will also be used as a cover for our literature.

"Out-of-Town" Territory Now Solid Union Ground

By HARRY WANDER
Manager, Out-of-Town Department
I.L.G.W.U.

In the report of the General Executive Board to the Convention, most likely the activities of the Eastern Out-of-Town Department will be mentioned in more than one chapter. As this department is one of the most important branches of our International, from the viewpoint of membership and also of the large territory which it covers, the general membership of the I.L.G.W.U. might be interested to learn what the Eastern Out-of-Town Department has achieved during the past year, the number of members it organized in each trade, and the conditions under which those members are working.

A Glimpse of the Past

Before the campaign of last Summer, this Department had about 800 members, and eighty per cent of them cloakmakers. Dress shops, which were in the majority in this territory, were the hardest to organize and to keep unionized. When we did succeed, once in a while, in organizing a few dress shops, they would rarely stay with us longer than one season. In most cases, when we came around the following season to these shops, we would find new sets of workers consisting of young girl apprentices who were afraid to talk to us as that frequently meant to them the loss of their jobs.

In these dress shops, hours of labor were practically limitless. In fact, being piece-workers, and getting a very low price per garment, these workers themselves were interested to work long hours in order to earn something. Such was the condition practically everywhere, but in Connecticut conditions were especially bad. It was not at all unusual for workers to receive $3 for a full week's work. Who does not remember, just a year and a half ago, when the newspapers and leading journals printed names of Connecticut shops where workers were receiving $1.70 for 50 hours' work? Those who are familiar with conditions existing before the 1933 strike can realize what a revolution took place in those out-of-town dress shops and what difficulties we had to encounter before we succeeded in unionizing those workers and in establishing the work conditions they now have.

We Start on Nerve

We started the campaign without any financial resources. The organizers whom we engaged were promised from $20 to 30 a week, and even that sum they didn't receive regularly. Only the ironbound determination of President Dubinsky to go through with an organization campaign gave us encouragement to continue our work. The preliminary campaign lasted seven weeks, and when the general strike was called in the dress industry on August 16, 1933, and we saw the masses of workers walking out of the shops to the halls which we had prepared for them, we knew success was certain. When the strike was settled, the problem before us was how to organize these 25,000 workers into local unions in all the widely scattered cities and towns and to [illegible] machinery to govern and control smoothly all the new locals and to adapt this great mass of new members to union rules and conditions.

This was, indeed, a hard job which required a great deal of time and patience. It is really impossible to tell the story in detail. Just figure out that every conceivable trade-union problem, every kind of complaint, almost any sort of query kept pouring in every hour of the day, every day in the week—from the various localities under the jurisdiction of our department. I had cases where members would come to see me to ask advice even of a strictly personal nature. Well, some of our organizers like to say that the union should be regarded as a sort of religion, so why be surprised if some of the members do consider their union officers something like pastors?

Entrenched Now

Yet the work went on steadily. Thanks, particularly, to the officers in charge of the various locals and the cooperation of active members, it can be said with emphasis that our Union is now deeply entrenched in the dress and cloak shops of the "Out-of-Town" territory. An example of this loyalty was shown three months ago at the time of the stoppage ordered against some jobbers who were not living up to the terms of the agreement. The contracting shops of these jobbers in Connecticut, up-state New York, New Jersey, Long Island, etc., were completely tied up. After that marvelous demonstration, every one of us became convinced that our dress locals were out of the stage of infancy, and that they could well take care of their interests.

Our work among the dressmakers and cloakmakers has no longer the character of simple organization work, with the main object of enrolling members, because, as everyone knows by this time, they are practically one hundred per cent organized. We are regularly calling staff meetings of all the officers of the "Out-of-Town" locals, to instruct them on practical matters and to discuss union problems of common interest. This practice has also enabled the various local managers to get acquainted, through the reports of their colleagues, with conditions existing in neighboring locals, and it has [illegible] uniform working conditions throughout the entire territory.

Sound Internally

As to the internal situation of these new locals and the way they conduct their union business, I have made it a point of getting direct information by supervising chairladies' meetings and even shop meetings, and promoting and attending as frequently as possible general membership, executive, educational and recreational meetings, or affairs of similar nature, where an officer may get in direct contact with rank-and-file members and receive their genuine reaction as to how their locals are performing their duties.

It is a revelation to watch how these new union members conduct their business, the seriousness and the interest shown in the questions that are taken up at meetings, and the manner in which they are disposed of.

Membership

Our membership consists of 24,500 members, divided as follows:

Dressmakers	18,300
Cloakmakers	2,300
Corsetmakers	1,200
Underwear and Brassiere workers	1,550
Blousemakers and Misc.	650

This membership is spread over a wide territory, taking in New Jersey, Connecticut, up-State New York, Westchester County, Long Island and Staten Island. In order to control the shops, we have established thirteen offices as follows:

New Jersey	6
Connecticut	4
Long Island	1
Westchester	2

with staffs in every office to take care of complaints and records of the shops.

The Contact Office

The New York Joint Board of Dressmakers also has established an Out-of-Town Department with Brother Israel Horowitz in charge. This office has proved a very valuable agency in speeding up attention to complaints filed by our Department against New York jobbers. Educational activities have been started in almost every local through meetings, lectures and sociables. These gatherings are very much appreciated by our members. And I strongly urge that they be continued, in order to stimulate the desire of our members to learn about their union and the labor movement in general, which is absolutely essential for them.

In conclusion, I want to say that as far as the "out-of-town" dress shops are concerned, they are 100 per cent organized, and the workers appreciate what the Union has done for them. They are ready to make sacrifices to keep up and protect their work conditions. As far as the cloak shops are concerned, there are still a few non-union shops left in several localities. The workers in the corset industry are not fully organized yet, and we expect to start a general campaign in that industry as soon as conditions will permit. The same thing is true of the children's dress and the underwear trades. As this article is being written, the Out-of-Town Department is conducting a number of shop strikes, mostly in the children's dress industry. A campaign on a general scale will have to be undertaken next season in order to complete the organization in the trades mentioned above.

Holiday Spirit Abroad

When the convention call, issued by President Dubinsky, was read before the local executive boards in all the out-of-town locals, there was a regular holiday spirit everywhere. Our members then first realized that they are officially recognized and are a part of our International Union. We are coming to the Chicago convention with 73 delegates representing 30 local unions of the out-of-town localities. And I trust that those elected will represent their constituents in a proper and effective way and I am sure that the convention will welcome these new representatives of workers in our midst, so that they might be encouraged when they return back home to work more strenuously to strengthen and solidify their local unions.

First Executive Board, Local 161, Paterson, N. J.

Seated: Left to right—Vera Coppo, Secy.—Norris Sacharoff, Local Rep.—Angie Arabella—Israel Horowitz, New York Rep.—Bertha Tarantino—Romildo Cerruti, Chairman—Anna Kula, Staff Organizer.
Second Row: Josephine Occhipinti—Mary Ventura—Molly Cohen—Anna Kahwaty—Millie Boscarino—Margaret Damiano—Thelma Peacock.
Third Row: Dorothy Lane—Connie Trapanese—Connie Venezia—Pauline Yoremchuk—Mary Pullins—Ella Bumpass.

HIKES AND TRIPS

The Educational Department is conducting visits to the various museums of art and industry, to "Latin America," Chinatown, and other districts of interest, and to newspaper, movie and bakery plants. Other places of interest, such as Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty, Empire State, Chrysler and Woolworth Buildings and Sing Sing Prison will also be included.

Trips and hikes are being conducted to Bear Mountain, to the various islands surrounding New York, to Philadelphia, Washington, up the river to Albany, up the Long Island Sound and to Niagara Falls. These trips and hikes will be of an educational character and will be in charge of an experienced leader. Special low rates will be charged for boat and railroad trips.

It is needless to emphasize the recreational value of such trips. Especially important are outdoor activities for our members who work indoors. For more information you can write or visit our Educational Department, 3 West 16th Street, New York, N. Y., or you may inquire at the office of your local union.

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cause his prosperity depends upon the purchasing power of the many.

It is most important of all to the worker. It backs the efforts of his union to protect him against exploitation by the greedy employer who would sacrifice the good of the whole, and demoralize the labor market, for a little extra money in his own pocket.

The NRA garment label should be not only shopping guide but shopping law to the worker.

Singing in the Shop

By ROSE PESOTTA

It is early in the "season" and everyone in the shop is at his or her machine. The December afternoon is dreary. Outside snow is coming down in heavy, wet flakes which turn to slush when they strike the pavement. Inside, the bright yellowish incandescents cast a ghastly reflection on the whitewashed walls of the dress factory. On such afternoons song sounds good and helps to dispel the monotonous whir of the "iron horses."

"Hannale, —a-nu?" Issie turns to his neighbor—"What about 'Kol-Nidre'?"

Hannale, without even a turn of her head, begins Issie's favorite chant. She has a fine soprano and sings the chant with the intricate intonations of a cantor whom she had once heard. All listen to her intently and join in at times. But Hannale, dark, vivacious, with fire in her eyes, after repeating the same chant, wanders into something else in the same key. She sings in a low voice, gradually raising it into a fine oriental lament.

Moishe, too, is a singer and at times both render a duet. He suddenly raises his voice and swings into the *Caucasian Sketches*.

The spontaneous outbreak of song embraces all corners of the shop. Such concerts are not uncommon for the shop. Good music, folk songs of all nationalities in all languages, arias from favorite operas, difficult music from well-known symphonies, and jazz are in the repertoire. The shop is a severe critic—art, science, literature, music, war, revolutions, are scrutinized, evaluated and criticized. Outside the factory, a garment worker is often a student, an art lover and a lecture-goer. Beethoven, Wagner, Mozart, Puccini, and Stravinsky are familiar names to the shop. Many shop workers have spent hours standing in line after a day's work to get a "standing seat" when some famous musician has rendered a public recital. If the musician performs something familiar, it will be in the shop program the next day. Music has brightened many cheerless factory days. Without music, life in the shop would be dull and colorless.

Next to the symphonies and operas, come the folk-songs, and here the internationalism of the shop is revealed. Josephine, the draper, has a sweet coloratura soprano. Her native romantic songs "almost carry your heart away", as David says. She begins:

Partono 'e bastimente
pe' terre assaje luntane. . . .
Cantano a buordo: so napulitane. . . .
Cantano pe' tramonte
'o golfo gia' scumpare
'e a luna, 'a miezzo 'o mare,
nu poco e Napule
tte fa vede! . . .

Her voice is warm and pleasant, and those already familiar with the melody fall in line. The Italians sing a low accompaniment as Josephine sings the chorus. Her first song finished, there is a demand for more. "Sing Santa Lucia"! "Santa Lucia" is heard from all sides, and her clear young voice sweeps into that familiar Italian folk-song. The others join, and Hebrew, Russian, German and Italian are blended into one melody. Songs and moods follow each other in rapid succession. Demands for special numbers by special singers are heard as soon as one song is finished.

"Tony, sing 'Rimpianto';"

Tony, the presser, begins:

Come un sogno d'or, scolpito e' nel cuore
il ricordo, ancor di quell'amor. . . ."

Haster, the Swedish finisher, sings:

"Oh thou
fairest domain
Bright gem within the shining crown of Sweden
The tranquil joy that fills me, that here I regain
I would not change for all the bliss of Eden."

Solidly the shop helps her out. As the Swedish are not numerous, the songs are not well known, and next someone sings an old English Gypsy song:

"There were three gypsies—a come to my door,
And downstairs ran this—a lady o!
One sang high and the other sang low,
And the other sang bonny, bonny Biscay O!

It is a long story about the wife of a lord who ran away with the gypsies and after the lord finally located her in the gypsy camp re asks her:

"Oh what makes you leave your house and land?
And what makes you leave your money O!
What makes you leave your new wedded lord,
To go with the raggle-taggle gypsies O!

To which she replies:
"O what care I for my house and land?
And what care I for money, O!
What care I for my new wedded lord
I'm off with the raggle-taggle gypsies O!"

"I wish mine would play such a trick," puts in Meyer, the wise-cracker, "but she wouldn't, I know."

Aurora sings her Spanish:

"Es el amor Mariosa
Que la salida del sol
Extiende sus blanca alas
Y vuela de flor en flor.
Es el amor un jilguero
Que busca nuevo placer
Y manda su dulce cantor
A la primera que ve.

Po eso mor esa mia
Qaundo te vi!

Tangoes, Mexican and Argentinian, follow. Then the mighty baritone of Andrew, the presser, is heard:

"Volga, volga mati rodnaja
Volga Russkaja reka
Nie vidala ti podarka?
Tot donskavo Kosaka?"

He sings about his native Volga river and the bands of Don Cossacks and their leader, Stenka Razin, the legendary figure of peasant liberation. A longing note sounds in his voice—the voice of a peasant in a garment shop.

The song is flowing, as do the waters on the Volga river. Andrew already has forgotten the iron and is completely overtaken by memories of his youth on this very river.

Hershel, his partner, a "tailor from home", sings worker-songs traditionally given over from generation to generation:

"Nu hammerli, hammerli klap!
O! gicher ain klap noch ain klap!
Mein eintziger shpeiser bistu,
On dier fun hunger gei ich ois."

His iron really gives the impression of the sounds of a hammer each time he puts it into the ironbed. Hershel has no voice to speak of; the words are more recited than sung. He spent his apprenticeship at the tailor's shops at home in East Europe and now he visualizes drab cheerless years while singing the songs of those days.

Bundist songs, revolutionary songs calling to action, sung in a language old, yet young in spirit.

Hershel lost some lines but memory brings the last lines almost as good as the first ones and he goes on.

At the finishers' table, Sarah sings:

"Hullet, hullet, beise winten,
Yest is eier tseit
Thut not-kummen zich der feigen
Der summer is nisht gait!"

This song is appropriate, as the wind outside is really growing stronger and so the chorus join in many languages.

The office girl runs out:

"There is a customer in the show room and he cannot hear a word of what they are talking to him. Can't you be quiet for a while?"

A sale means work for the crew, so the mass concert instantly stops. They cannot be silent long, so here and there an individual will go on.

"Drink to me only with thine eyes"... Celia sings and Kalman tries to follow her in second voice and is immediately stopped with an abrupt "Shut up" from Margie.

Then someone takes up the "good music", the Fifth Symphony, the Unfinished, or the Pathetique. It is remarkable how untutored garment workers repeat a symphony almost without any flaws, "whistling" in phrases to bring out flute notes, or with lips imitating the fingers on strings, particularly in the third movement of Beethoven's Fifth.

Veronica, the examiner, quietly sings:

"Take me back to old Virginny. There's where the cotton and the corn and 'tatoes grow."

She sings almost to herself. She knows the negro spirituals, but she is shy and it takes a lot of coaxing before she sings:

"Deep river my home is over Jordan
Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into camp ground.
Don't you want to go? To the gospel feast?
Where all is joy and all is peace?
Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into camp ground!"

Someone begins "Way down upon the Swanee River" which is followed by "Nita! Juanita".

This, sung by an international, interracial group of workers, sounds really pleasant.

Greitel, the old German finisher, is not able to follow the younger co-workers in their rapidity of acquiring new melodies, so she does justice to her own native songs.

"Guten Abend, gut Nacht, mit rosen bedacht,
Mit naglien bedackt schlpf 'unter die Deck!
Morgen frahwens Gott will, wirst du wieder gewek.
Morgen fruwens Gott will, wirst du wieder geweckt!"

Her contralto is of old type singers and she draws out the "Morgen fruh" into a long note. But the younger co-worker, Friedel, is already picking up the next melody:

"Du, du liegst mir um hertzen
Du, du liegst mir um sind. . . ."

Thus they go on and on, Alpine whistling and singing old German lullabies, even the Lorelei.

The younger girls keep the shop posted on the "latest hits", so those too are given a condescending hearing, out of courtesy to the "kids" who mean well. Jazz is not within their sphere. The shop traditionally adheres to the classics.

After the jazz somebody will crack a "funny one" in some other language. "Sing Booblichki" is the next demand.

Sonia masters the latest Russian hits and she begins:

"Kupite booblichki,
Gorjachi Booblichki,
Brosaite rublichki
Ko mnie skorey!
V noch nenastnuiu
Menia neochastnete
Torgovku chastnuiu
Ach poselie. . . ."

The song is about a girl selling hot dough-nuts on the streets. Her lament is very tragic as she continues singing the refrain on and on, until another demand will cut it short.

Tania sings a gypsy song with feeling and understanding. She conveys the passion of the lone gypsy who is bewitched by the black eyes of a gypsy maiden. Even Ben, not much of a singer, falls into the mood and his shivering voice also helps the "tralalala". It is sung well. At times someone from the office may be seen peeping through the door to listen to music mingled with the buzz of the motor-power machines.

Gypsy songs, or Russian songs follow in line. Caucasian, Ukranian, Polish, Roumanian, Jewish; at times a parody on some real patriotic tune will get its rehearsal in the shop. Until Signora gets tired and unheralded bursts out loudly into "Funicull" which is followed by a more lively chorus:

Compagni avanti, alla riscossa
Bandiera rossa, bandiera rossa
Avanti popolo! Alla riscossa!
Bandiera Rossa TRIONFERA'!

Bandiera rossa la trionfera!
Bandiera rossa la trionfera!
Bandiera rossa la trionfera!

Il Socialismo)
Evviva Il Comuniamo) e la liberta!
l' Anarchia)

This last one brings a burst of laughter and happens every time the "Red Flag" is sung in Italian. Each revolutionary faction tries to beat the other with their panacea until "Evviva la Rivoluzione e la liberta!" which is accepted as the happy medium. It is a fine revolutionary march, full of vigor and vitality.

Someone is eager to give the native worker's songs a hearing:

"Solidarity forever, Solidarity forever,
Solidarity forever,—One Union makes us strong!"

* * *

The boss in the meantime, finished with the office routine, promenades through the shop only to be greeted with:

"Oh I like my boss
He is a good friend of mine
That is why I am starving
In the bread line."

Hallelujah I am)
He is) a bum
You are)

roars the chorus to the delight of all. This brings a smile on the lips of the boss, and the singing goes on. Someone will shout "Hold the Fort", and again a solo begins cheerfully:

"Look you comrades, we the union
Banners waving high!
Reinforcements now appearing
Victory is nigh!

and the chorus bursts forth:

"Hold the Fort, for we are coming
Union men, be strong!
Side by side we battle onward
Victory will come!"

The day has passed. Outside, the snow has covered the pavements with a neat white blanket. The west wind is getting stronger and promises a hard frost. The shop has finished its day's toil of garments piled mountain high by the singing garment workers.

A Year Ago and Today

By ELIAS REISBERG, V.-P.
Manager, Philadelphia Dress Joint Board

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It is fitting and proper, on the eve of our Jubilee Convention, which is [illegible] what has taken place in our city and industry in the past year.

Long before the NRA came into being in its march toward recovery and upbuilding, our International Union, under the leadership of President Dubinsky, started its crusade in Philadelphia, where, years ago, the basis for another "New Deal"—the Declaration of Independence—was established. At the end of January, 1933, the Gen'l Executive Board held a meeting in New York. It is impossible at this time, when the Union is in its full glory, to describe minutely the mood and the spirit in which the president and the entire General Executive Board found themselves at that meeting. It was replete with despair, with pessimism, disillusionment and discouragement. But, as trade unionists and good soldiers, we were able to shake off that mood, and toward the end of the meeting, a decision was made to start on the upward road at any cost. The Philadelphia waist and dress market was chosen as the first ground upon which to build the line of trenches in the battle for a stronger union.

We Start in February

After plans were fully worked out, the campaign was started in February. It was a drive of intensity, enthusiasm and optimism. On February 28, a mass meeting was held in the Adelphia Theatre, at which President Dubinsky and the writer called upon the waist and dressmakers of Philadelphia to shake off their fear and stand ready for a fight against sweatshop conditions and for collective bargaining. The strike was scheduled for March 7, but right after the inauguration of President Roosevelt, the bank holiday was declared, and we were unable to call the strike at the scheduled time. The readers of "Justice" will scarcely be able to imagine the difficulty in which we found ourselves, after the referendum vote was taken overwhelmingly endorsing a strike. Also, the strike was endorsed by the International, yet we were unable to carry it through. We held on to our courage and decided to watch carefully and wait for the propitious moment.

Because of the conviction that we were doing the right thing, and because of the splendid strategy and the proper judgment displayed in deciding to strike at the proper moment, we decided to call the strike at a most unusual time. It was unprecedented in the history of our International Union, for, never before was a general strike of waist and dressmakers been called in the month of May.

A Forerunner Strike

The strike was called on May 9, and its remarkable results are known to everybody. Practically the entire industry was shut down, and that memorable day will never be erased from the memory of those who witnessed the march of the waist and dressmakers of Philadelphia from the shops to the designated halls. Five thousand of them walked out on the call of the Union to battle for shorter hours, higher wages—to battle for industrial freedom, for union recognition. Because of this splendid response, the manufacturers were forced to settle with the Union in three days' time. The agreement concluded was subsequently used as a model for other agreements effected by the International in various markets in other parts of the country, and provided for a closed union shop with adjustment machinery to take up all disputes and grievances that might arise as well as many other advantages that would make the life of the workers less burdensome and more pleasant and com[illegible] in the shops as well as at home.

This was the first victory of our International Union in the crusading march that followed shortly thereafter. While it is true that the NRA helped considerably to strengthen our achievements, nevertheless, it was the determination of the waist and dressmakers of Philadelphia to once and for all become organized, and, through their Union, to fight collectively for better conditions, that was the greatest contributing factor towards establishing the position which we hold at present. And now that we are a year older, we can conscientiously celebrate the first anniversary of the success of the Philadelphia Union.

Our Gains; New Home

During this past year, we have scored some splendid accomplishments through the medium of our price committee in the shops as well as through the existing adjustment machinery. We have been able to gain wage increases for our members, to shorten the hours of labor, to strengthen the ranks of our members morally as well as in other ways. And the net result is at present as follows: An official increase of 40 per cent in wages has been gained; the codes have been installed in the four trades which comprise the waist and dress market in Philadelphia; work hours have been reduced from 50 to 35; the membership has increased from 500 to 6,500. And as an example of the interest displayed by the members in their reinstituted organization, it is worthy of mention that in the last elections, held recently, 2,000 members participated in the voting.

Among recent events which have transpired in our organization, mention must be made of the Ball given by the Cutters' Branch of Local 50, on April 13. This occasion was in celebration of the establishment of the Unemployment Insurance Fund in the Philadelphia dress trade, and was a complete success. The dressmakers of Philadelphia will celebrate the first anniversary of the revival of their organization in the form of a banquet to be held on May 19, at the Elks Club. As these lines are being written, preparations are busily going on to take care of the six to seven hundred guests expected at this gala affair, at which President Dubinsky and members of the General Executive Board are the guests of honor.

In this moment of joy and celebration, there recurs one thought in the hearts and minds of our members: that our International will go further and further on the road of triumph.

HANDS WANTED

●

Hands wanted, says an "ad,"
And nothing, nothing more.
Some girls read it
And they come to the master's door;
And he hires only hands,
And nothing, nothing more.

The hands weave, spin and sew,
And he thinks they do nothing more,
But they love and dream, hope and sigh,
Though he hears only the loom's creaking cry
And nothing, nothing more.

He sees not the brutality suppressed,
He sees only that hands shall not rest
And nothing, nothing more.

So they come in their youthful bloom
To pale and wither before the loom,
And when they have seen a better day
The master spurns these jaded hands away
And hangs a sign outside the door.
"Hands wanted," it says,
And nothing, nothing more.

Isaac Einsein

Pre-Convention Thoughts from Boston

By PHILIP KRAMER, V.-P.
Manager, Boston Joint Board

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Our Jubilee Convention is soon at hand. Though far away from Chicago, and a considerable distance from New York, where a convention atmosphere is permeating every nook and corner, we, in Boston, too, feel the approach of our great union holiday. Boston, this year, will be represented by a greater number of delegates than at any previous convention. The Boston membership of the International is equally excited about the coming historic event.

Meantime, let's turn to our daily life and daily occurrences. Since the advent of the NRA, our Union in Boston, like, I suppose, all the other division of the I.L.G.W.U. in every market, has taken on a new face, as it were,—new work conditions, new problems, new means of enforcement of standards and, at times, new complications.

Giving Time to NRA

Spending a great deal of time away from regular union work, spending hours without number and days on end at Code Compliance Board meetings, Regional Labor Board conferences, NRA Federal Board confabs—I often times wonder if the energy and time spent could be utilized to greater advantage and use to our organization in Boston. Nevertheless, we have it—I mean these latter-day institutions which are closely bound up with our daily work—and we must keep our eyes open and turn to advantage any development that may come our way.

Right here in Boston, as I take stock of the Coat Code enforcement situation, I may say that we are getting quick and quite satisfactory results. On the other hand, Dress Code compliance is still very slow; but that, too, is coming around gradually. Yet, and I am running the risk of being proclaimed old-fashioned, my own choice of compliance methods, or shall I say, the most effective weapon which I should prefer to use against a chiseler, a weapon which brings faster and better results, is the strike.

At this moment, the event of most importance to our workers is the re-establishment of week-work in the cloak industry.

In July 1933

Last July found us in miserable conditions; the situation actually was a shameful one and for a time things looked hopeless. Then we tackled our job vigorously—we stopped off shops, carried through a number of wage readjustments, revising scales up to the scales of 1929, and bent all energies in the direction of preserving week-work. The contracts which we signed in February, 1934, with the cloak employers call for strict week-work which we, in this town, dearly cherish.

Another trend is making itself felt in our dress market which is worthwhile noting here.

There is a distinct tendency in Boston at present to eliminate the contractor as a factor in production. Jobbers are beginning to open inside shops and inside manufacturers are enlarging their plants. A case to mention is the Majestic Dress Company, a former jobber, which opened up a 64-machine shop, and is now employing 100 workers inside. This operation eliminated 5 contractors who formerly made up this firm's work. Other jobbing firms are following this example and this development will no doubt have a decisive effect upon the dress production market.

Fighting An Ugly Feature

A development, a very unpleasant one, which the Union in Boston is at present busy combating, is the appearance of employer-fostered gangsterism. In order to protect themselves against the persistent efforts of the Union to introduce decent work conditions in their shops, several non-union dress manufacturers have engaged strong-arm men to "take care" of their interests. These gangs have since been molesting the members of our organization and have even threatened to attack its leaders. Moreover, some of these self-same employers who had allowed themselves to become involved with these gangs now find that they are caught in their own tentacles and find it difficult to escape their clutches.

The Union is fighting off this new abomination to the best of its ability and we are making headway. A couple of these misguided employers have now signed up with the Union and they are getting our aid in freeing themselves from these leeches.

We have organized a local of underwear workers, No. 179, and a movement for a general strike is already being planned for this industry for the coming season. In Fall River, organization activity is going on at full speed. We have won there a seven-week strike in the shop of the Little Dorothy Dress Company, and formed a local in that town, No. 178. There is a considerable cotton garment industry in Fall River, manufacturing mainly house dresses, and we intend to center upon this place and make an effort to unionize it.

We are giving you just a sketchy picture of our daily life in Boston and surrounding territory which comes within the sphere of our activity. For the moment, however, the important thing is the next convention. It is on the mind and on the tongue of everybody.

Greetigs to all—until we meet in Chicago.

All Convention Messages should be addressed: Medinah Michigan Avenue Club, Chicago, Ill.

That Great Evening at the Hippodrome

By S. ROMUALDI
of the I.L.G.W.U. Staff

Monday evening, April 30, 1934, will long be remembered by the organized Italian dressmakers of New York, as a date marking the climax of their fifteen years of struggle to build up a strong and influential organization. On that evening, the new administration of Local 89, chosen in an election in which more than 17,500 members took part, was inducted into office, at the Hippodrome. Over 5,000 members of Local 89 filled every available seat in the theatre, and with them were representatives of all the sister locals of the International from New York City and nearby localities, as well as representatives of other labor organizations.

Artistically decorated, with the banners of the Union flowing from the boxes of the tiers and on the stage; the platform banked high with flowers, tributes from dozens of dress shops; with thousands of men and women cheering and waving little red flags bearing the legend of the local and converting the theatre into a sea of red bunting; with the new officers of the local standing at attention as President Dubinsky was administering to them the oath of office under the glare of many camera lights; with the tunes of labor songs stirring the enthusiasm of the audience to a high pitch—the Hippodrome on that night presented as impressive and inspiring a spectacle as ever was witnessed in the labor movement of New York City.

Dubinsky Installs

The great meeting began promptly at 8 o'clock. After an introduction by John Gelo, chairman of the old board of Local 89, the assembly was addressed by Julius Hochman, general manager of the Dress Joint Board and by Isidore Nagler, manager of the Cloak Joint Board. President Dubinsky, who came up on the platform when the meeting opened at the head of the entire board-elect of the local and its general secretary Vice-President Luigi Antonini, then administered the oath of office to the members of the new administration of Local 89. President Dubinsky's talk was greeted by an outburst of enthusiasm from the audience, which rose to its feet, shouting and waving flags while the orchestra broke out into a martial labor tune.

Next came the election, right there on the platform, of a chairman of the new executive board, and Bro. Giuseppe Provvidenti was elected to the post without opposition. This was followed by a stirring address by Luigi Antonini, the leader of the Italian dressmakers. Antonini's speech, greeted by a prolonged ovation, sounded the keynote of the evening. He paid tribute to the International and to President Dubinsky, in particular, for the part the parent organization of the Union had played in the great success achieved by the Italian dressmakers, and concluded his remarks by pledging himself and the administration of Local 89 to "serve efficiently, with loyalty and honor, the thousands of brothers and sisters who comprise the *mighty family* of our invincible organization."

La Guardia Speaks

After the installation meeting, the audience remained to listen to the rendition of the two operas—Cavalleria Rusticana and Pagliacci—by the Hippodrome Opera Co. During the intermezzo of Cavalleria, Mayor F. H. LaGuardia and Mrs. LaGuardia arrived at the theatre, and when their presence was observed, the entire audience leaped to its feet and gave them a rousing reception. Mayor LaGuardia, in a few words, congratulated Vice-President Luigi Antonini and President Dubinsky on the remarkable results achieved by the I.L.G.W.U. in raising the work and living standards of the Italian dressmakers, concluding by saying: "It is my privilege to say to you officially, as mayor of the City of New York, that the city is proud of you."

The installation ceremony and the opera performance were broadcast by Stations WEVD and WHOM.

Twenty Years in the Underwear Industry

By SAMUEL SHORE
Manager Local 62

As we think, in terms of decades, of conditions of life and labor in many of our industries, we are forced to reach but one conclusion: we have marched away from the past such a great distance that the past seems hardly believable and the old design of our living appears but a faint memory.

It was 21 years ago when I first became associated with the white goods workers' organization, a small group of men and women toiling in an industry where long hours were the inexorable law, where the lives of poor immigrant girls were being fleeced and mutilated by the endless toil, pitifully small wages and peonage conditions of labor. A year later, in the Winter of 1913, came the first general strike in the white goods industry. It was a battle not only against the employers, but against our own pessimism, against hopelessness, a struggle of sheer despair.

A Bulwark Rises

Yet, to our own amazement—and I include in this the leadership of the International at that time and the group of loyal and courageous souls who were battling for the very lives of the mistreated and down-trodden white goods workers—the strike of 1913 turned out a real success. It gave us a union, Local 62, which endured and weathered in the next two decades all the storms and vicissitudes of the insecure existence of a seasonal industry.

From 1913 to 1919, the Union carried on vigorously and performed its mission as a bulwark for the white goods workers as best it could. We struck for 44 hours in that year and we gained it. Then a new situation arose to torment our workers. It was a definite switch from the old muslin, batiste and cotton line of work to a silk line of production. For several years, the trade was in the grip of a chronic slump; less underwear was being consumed and less produced; unemployment was rampant and the strength of the Union along with this production in this industry began to dwindle.

In the 20's

In the middle 20's, the transformation in the underwear industry finally took definite shape. We were becoming predominantly silk underwear workers. Big silk underwear shops had appeared in the trade and the great majority of the factories moved from the downtown districts uptown towards Madison Avenue. Along with this change, however, came an influx of new elements of workers into the shops,—Italian, Syrian, Jewish-American girls, groups to whom unionism was a strange word and solidarity of labor a meaningless phrase. It was next to impossible to interest these girls in the Union, especially with the meagre resources which Local 62 at that time possessed.

So when I came back to Local 62 in 1931, I found a gloomy picture before me. Even the old Cotton Garment Association, the employers' organization in the industry, all but fell apart. It required herculean efforts, indeed, to make headway under such conditions, but we went to work with zeal and energy. Shop after shop was approached and struck; a Lingerie Manufacturers' Association was formed of some of the leading silk underwear employers and within a few months we concluded a collective agreement with them.

Recent History

A basis for further organization was thus laid. We tackled many other shops, but the industrial crisis that was continuing was still against us. We experienced one setback after another while the International was doing all it could to help us keep afloat. Then came the Spring and Summer of 1933. The NRA became a potent reality in American industrial life. And along with it rose the hopes of the underwear workers and plans for a great drive were beginning to take shape.

The rest is recent history. We had our great strike in the Fall of 1933; and we won control of work conditions in a large industry, a magnificent victory which brought thousands of members into Local 62 and established livable earnings and decency of employment terms in the vast majority of the underwear shops.

* * *

Within a few days we shall be on our way to Chicago to the Jubilee Convention of the I. L. G. W. U. Personally, I prefer to term it "Victory Convention." This holiday reunion in the Windy City will bring together delegates of a great new army of workers who only a year ago were despairing of the next day, steeped in gloom and apathy. Today the wings of hope flutter high in our midst.

FROM ST. LOUIS

By BEN GILBERT

St. Louis members of the I.L.G.W.U., for the past few weeks, were quite busy with elections. Local officers were elected in all branches and, in addition, we picked our convention delegates in the same balloting.

The meetings were attended by about 500 members. Sister Ruby Marks, the wife of an outstanding union man, was elected president of Local 104. Margaret Nichells was reelected secretary of that local. Bro. Sam Goldberg was reelected president of the Joint Board and chairman of the Presser's Local 103, and Sister Clara Kaiser was reelected secretary of the Joint Board. As chairlady of her shop at Ely-Walker, the Janet Walker shop, she has been very active and her work is appreciated by the workers. Proof of this was offered by the gifts she received from them on that occasion.

The rest of the elected officers are all excellent union members. The installation of the officers was impressive and all the women officers received bouquets of flowers from their shops at the ceremony. The executive boards and the Joint Board have adopted a decision that each shop must have a meeting at least once a month.

The Women's Trade Unoin League and the I.L.G.W.U.

By ROSE SCHNEIDERMAN
President, Women's Trade Union League,
Member NRA Labor Advisory Board

When one looks back at the early days of the organization, one is overcome by the change in the whole women's apparel industry, brought about by the Union in these thirty-five years.

My first inkling that there was such an organization came when I started my work as part-time organizer for the New York Women's Trade Union League. Until that time, I had been busy with my own organization, the United Cloth Hat and Cap Makers' Union. Its struggles against the open shop, the victorious outcome of its general strike which had lasted for thirteen weeks, and the subsequent rebuilding of the organization, took all the spare time of the active members.

Part-Time Organizer

Because there were always many thousands of women engaged in the needle trades, the National Women's Trade Union League, from its earliest days, was, naturally, interested in and gave unstinted support to the upbuilding of the unions belonging to the I.L.G.W.U. This was done mostly by volunteer members of the League, and it was not until 1908 that the League decided to engage an organizer. I was chosen to fill that post on part-time.

My first task was to visit the local unions which had women members and to offer them the assistance of the Women's Trade Union League, and so, in turn, I visited the Wrapper and Kimono Makers, the Shirtwaist Makers, the Cloak Makers and the Children's Dress Makers, the four organizations existing at that time. Needless to say, the memberships of these locals were very small, and while constant organization campaigns were in progress, no real headway was made until the great shirtwaist makers' strike of 1909. It was during that strike that I first came in contact with the leaders of the International, with Abraham Rosenberg, president; John Dyche, secretary-treasurer; Sol Polakoff, and others. I remember visiting the office of the International, then located at 25 Third Avenue—an old, dilapidated building which is still in existence, I believe. The office consisted of one room with a number of old desks and shelves piled high with membership books. Evidently, John Dyche was anticipating a rush of new applicants and had fortified himself with thousands of union membership books.

Heroic Girls

All who lived through the days of that memorable strike of thirty thousand shirtwaist makers can vividly recall the keen interest with which the strike was regarded by the entire country. Neither can they forget the heroic girls which that thirty-week strike brought to the fore. Clara Lemlich, Bessie Switsky, Jenny Bloch and Miss Rothstein, as well as many others whose names I cannot now recall, were in the thick of the battle, Abraham Baroff, now deceased, Sam Schindler, Sigmund Haiman, who passed away only recently, J. J. Goldstein of the Bakers' Union, and many other officers of Local 25 led the fight.

I also want, at this time, to give credit to the excellent cooperation given by the members of the Women's Trade Union League, who also gave of their best to help win the strike. Outstanding among them were Mary Dreier, the president; Helen Marot, secretary; Carola Versohoffer, Elizabeth Dutcher, Violet Pike, Pauline Newman, Elsie Cole, Lillian Wald and her co-workers of the Henry Street Settlement, and a host of others who kept the strike story alive in the newspapers throughout the thirteen weeks, helped to raise funds, were on the picket line day in and day out, while still others sat in the courts to bail the girls as they were arrested. The number of arrests during that strike was so great that getting bail became a very important factor in the struggle. Many of the League's friends who owned property deeded that property to others so that they could answer the call for bail during all times of the day and night. And the confidence placed in the strikers was repaid a hundred-fold, as there was not one case of default. Among the lawyers who gave freely of their time and service to the strikers, the names of Morris Hillquit and Meyer London stand out particularly in my memory.

Colakmakers Follow

The impetus which the dress strike gave to trade union organization in the needle trades was most gratifying. The slogan of the day became: "If the waistmakers can do it, why can't we?" The trade union idea had taken hold and the East Side was seething with activity. The cloak makers were first to follow the waistmakers' example. Mass-meeting after mass-meeting was called. Everyone who could help was pressed into service. The United Hebrew Trades, the Women's Trade Union League, members of the Socialist Party, and many others did very effective work. One figure who impressed me most during the campaign was J. Weinberg, an old-time cloakmaker and a very effective speaker. Most of the speeches at that time, of course, were delivered in Yiddish and Italian. Weinberg's technique was an interesting one. He would first make his audience weep by describing the misery and the tribulations through which the cloakmaker was going, then he would scold them for the patience with which they suffered; and finally, he would arouse them to great heights of enthusiasm by picturing to them the changes in the conditions which could be brought about if only they would join the organization and go forth to battle. The victorious strike of the cloak makers gave new impetus to the men's garment industry and other sections of the needle trades for greater efforts at unionization.

Local 62 Strike

During this time I was engaged in keeping alive a group of girls working at women's muslin underwear. This union was the result of a strike of about 100 girls in a shop then located on Grand Street and was duly chartered by the I.L.G.W.U. as the White Goods Workers' Union, Local 62. The conditions in this industry were about as bad as one can imagine, the working hours were ten a day, the wages were as low as $3 a week, and, in addition, in some of the shops, the girls had to pay for thread, needles and the electric power which they used. While there were in this trade outstanding large factories, employing hundreds of girls, it was awfully hard to arouse their interest, and so the membership of Local 62 was continually changing.

About 1911, the International assigned Sol Elstein, a member of the staff, to help in the campaign of organizing these girls. Sporadic strikes occurred in the factories on the East Side, and, little by little, we were able to consolidate a small membership that kept the local going. As a result of one of these strikes, Molly Lipschitz came in. She was a girl in her teens at the time, but had command of the English language, which most of the members were lacking, and we immediately made her secretary of the Union, which post she filled for many years. We called mass-meetings and shop meetings, distributed thousands of leaflets and finally succeeded in organizing one of the big factories, which gave the Union financial basis for support. While I gave most of my time to the Union, it was necessary to have an organizer who would give his entire time to the Union. It then became our task to find someone who would undertake to fill that post. After many trials and errors, we finally got Samuel Shore, the present executive supervisor, to become the organizer for the White Goods Workers' Union.

The League Helps

The organization began to pick up very nicely and a request was made to the International to sanction a general strike for the early part of 1913. That sanction was given in the early Spring of 1912, and we then set about getting ready for the general strike. Shop meetings and mass-meetings were called throughout the period leading up to the strike, and thousands of pieces of literature were distributed in front of the factories. In order to get real information as to the number of women employed in the industry, the Women's Trade Union League undertook to make a study, and so it was that Violet Pike, under the guise of having to get material for her college thesis, was able to get the facts that were necessary. In order to avoid the chaotic condition which we had experienced in the calling of the general strike of the waistmakers, we made up our minds to make adequate plans for this walkout. We, accordingly, reserved halls and enlisted the services of a number of members of the League, who could devote their time and undertake to be responsible for each hall.

The date for the calling of this strike was set for January 23. However, it was kept secret in order not to give the employers any opportunity to prepare against it. I well remember the morning of the twenty-third. All those who were to distribute the strike call leaflets in front of the factories met at the Women's Trade Union League, whose headquarters at that time were at 43 East 22nd Street, and from there proceeded to the factories. On each circular there was designated the particular place where the strikers were to congregate.

A Six-Weeks' Fight

Shortly after eight o'clock, the walkout began, and the section of the city in which the factories were located looked as though a huge parade were in progress. Thousands of girls left their machines and joined the strike. Due to the preparations we had made, we were in a position to know at the end of the day exactly which factories had responded, how many came down, and where we needed to concentrate to bring down those who were reluctant to join the strike. The strike lasted for six weeks. As was the case in previous strikes, we had very little money. While the International gave partial aid, we had to find ways and means of getting support for the strikers.

Luckily, the strike did not last any longer than six weeks. Before this, the waist makers had had another general strike and had settled on a preferential union shop basis. We realized that under those conditions we could not hope to get any more than the waist makers got, and while we were able to raise wages considerably and do away with many of the petty tyrannies in the shops and also to establish a 52-hour week, all of which amounted to considerable at that time, we, nevertheless, had to accept a modified trade union [illegible] gave us, through the setting up of a grievance board, an opportunity to deal collectively with the Cotton Garment Manufacturers' Association.

The Work Goes On

This strike, like those which preceded it, brought to the forefront a number of girls who had done outstanding work. Mary Goff is the only one who is still connected with this Union. While only a youngster, she took a leading part in that strike. As in other strikes, we had members of the League, who did volunteer picket duty, and others who kept the publicity going. At the end of the strike, the Union's membership numbered five thousand strong.

My own connections with the International have been most gratifying. During the two years in which I was associated directly with it as one of its organizers, I was sent to Cleveland, Chicago, Boston and Philadelphia, to help with the organization work in those localities. Before severing my connections with the International, the big strike of the Cloak Makers was called. I was chairman of the speakers' committee and had the distinction of having David Dubinsky, now president of the International Union, on the staff of speakers. He was quite a young man at that time, but did excellent work in that strike in keeping the issues of the strike before the thirty thousand men and women who made up its ranks.

Salutes Union

It is interesting, therefore, as a continuance of my experience in the needle trades, to have been associated with most of the codes in these industries as labor adviser representing the Labor Advisory Board. Due to my knowledge of the industries, I have been able to serve the best interests of the men and women in the women's apparel industries. I regard my work in the NRA as a post-graduate course and am delighted at having had this opportunity.

In closing, I wish to salute President Dubinsky and his co-workers who make up the cabinet of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. They have done an outstanding piece of work in the past year. The headway they have made is phenomenal. I am sure that the membership fully appreciates all that they have done. May the International Union continue to grow in power and in usefulness!

"STEVEDORE" AT THE THEATRE UNION

The Theatre Union, producers of the anti-war play, "Peace on Earth," has a new play, "Stevedore."

This play deals with the problem of Negro and white workers in the South and is a powerful indictment of lynching.

This play commenced at the Civic Repertory Theatre (14th Street near 6th Avenue, New York City) on Wednesday, April 18.

To afford the workers an opportunity to see the play, the prices are low, ranging from 30c to $1.50.

Groups can arrange theatre parties at special rates.

I. L. G. W. U. Problems in Los Angeles

By PAUL BERG, Secretary
Los Angeles, Calif., Joint Board of Cloak and Dressmakers

West Coast Conference of I.L.G.W.U. Locals, Held at San Francisco, April 21, 22, 1934

Seated from right to left: Pine, Appel, Greenberg, Zacharin, Gassett, Silver, Gonzales, Menchoff, Feinberg, Berg, Labby, Cummings, Mayer, Schatz, Pearl. Standing from left to right: White, Deauz, Gienet, Enright, Mrs. Pine, Goodwin, Scott, Blumberg, Pesotta, Flores, Mrs. Pearl, Flores, Axelrod, Rubinstein, Sharon, Chenin, Rosenthal.

In the Dress Trade

Our last general dress strike, called on October 12, 1933, has not settled our problems with the employers, and the award of the Arbitration Board expires on August 1, 1934. Unsatisfactory as this Board's decision is to the Union, the manufacturers, nevertheless, lose no opportunity to violate it with a well calculated policy of defeating the efforts of the workers to organize.

Right after the settlement of the strike, the manufacturers proved, through their cowardly and dishonorable tactics, that they are out for a bloody war to a finish. Black-listing of active union members, exacting of promises not to strike again or demands that the workers give up union membership as a price for obtaining employment—these are some of the means employed by the manufacturers in their dealings with the workers.

Sabotaging Code

At the bottom of the bosses' fierce struggle against the Union is, of course, their determination not to live up to the labor provisions of the code. Most manufacturers pay wages below the code requirements and we have on record the payment of wages as low as $5 per week. So prevalent is the underpayment of wages, that the Industrial Adjustment Agency finds it impossible, in the absence of a strong union, to cope with them. Forcing a manufacturer to pay back pay is not sufficient to prevent him from repeating the violation. In addition, most workers do not report wage violations, fearing the loss of their jobs. Something drastic must be done to discipline these hardened chiselers.

The strike was a shocking surprise to the bosses. Not until the last minute did they believe that we would call the strike or that the workers would respond. The years of brutal abuse which the dressmakers had accepted meekly, without resistance, led the employers to believe that they were devoid of a spirit of protest. But the strike proved otherwise. For several weeks, the half-starved dressmakers kept the garment district in an uproar, demonstrating to open-shop Los Angeles their splendid fighting ability. This city does not remember another strike so militantly and so bitterly fought. However, these hard-headed bosses are of that variety which does not learn anything nor forget anything. They cannot forget the undisputed rule which they held over the workers and cannot learn that the workers have some rights, too. Despite all the efforts of the bosses, however, the workers are enthusiastically building the Union. The discrimination on the part of the bosses makes for increased bitterness and hate which are bound to explode with greater strength than in the first strike. Our dressmakers have tasted the glory of retaliation, and are preparing to match their strength again, remembering all the experience they gained in the first strike.

The opinion is current that the manufacturers might capitulate without a strike in view of their past experience. The last strike drove a score of them out of business, and those remaining lost heavily and are still paying the price in diminished orders. Probably because of the Los Angeles experience, the San Francisco dressmakers concluded an agreement with the Union on the closed-shop basis without a strike. But this is not likely to occur in Los Angeles, judging by their war-like attitude. The Union, in any event, is determined to complete the job at any price when the opportune time arrives. The International, as a whole, cannot afford to let this group of chiselers "get away witht it", in the face of the 30 per cent differential.

Cloakmakers' Situation

Our relations with the cloak manufacturers may be termed as satisfactory. We have a collective agreement with the Association, which represents about 90 per cent of the industry, and a number of independent agreements, leaving a few "fly-by-nights" with whom we have no agreements. The workers are nearly 100 per cent unionized, giving us complete union control in the industry. Our Spring season was very poor, but we managed to maintain union conditions in the shops. One can easily realize that without the Union, during such a season, wages would have sunk to probably the level of a year ago.

The "left" opposition in the cloakmakers' union are having a hard time finding issues for discrediting the leadership—not that our leadership is infallible—but so far, no major difference of policy has [illegible] makers must be constantly on the watch against unprincipled oppositions. Criticism should always be welcome; differences in policy, if any, should be discussed intelligently. Those who slander their opponents without cause expose themselves as unreasonable "kickers" only.

The Cutters' Situation

In the cutters' local, the situation is very critical, inspired and led by a couple of members of the dual union. The local today is in very poor shape. These "leaders" find it more convenient to discuss the virtues and abilities of the Joint Board officers at their membership and committee meetings rather than to take up trade problems or endeavor to organize the non-union cutters. By no means, are all the cutters to blame for this situation in their local, but a number of them have been impressed with the view that the aims of the Union can be reached by looking for faults in the Joint Board officers.

The cutters must realize that not by such means will they organize their Union and gain improved conditions in the shops. The dressmakers of Local 96 can well illustrate that, in spite of all difficulties, their organization committee is carrying on the work begun during the strike.

PORTLAND CLOAK SHOPS ALL ORGANIZED

By ERNEST LEONETTI
Secretary-Business Agent
Cloakmakers' Local No. 70, I.L.G.W.U.

Will wonders never cease?

On March 6th, the Associated Coat and Suit Manufacturers of Portland became a party of contractual relationship with the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. A few weeks later, the Independent Manufacturers followed in their footsteps, thereby closing a chapter in the workers' untiring efforts to obtain recognition.

Yes, it happened.

For the first time in the history of the cloak trade in Portland, the industry is united 100 per cent. The signing of these agreements culminated years of untiring efforts on the part of many loyal supporters of unionism. Two determined attempts in the years 1927 and 1932 were nipped in the bud, as it were, but in the Summer of 1933, a small group, including some workers who had been victimized in the two previous battles and who, nevertheless, refused to relax in their policies, again laid plans for another attempt. Inch by inch they proceeded to build the bulwarks of the present organization.

This February, the International dispatched Vice-President Israel Feinberg to the front. It was this battering ram, together with the many supporters who, by now, were rallying in great numbers, that succeeded in smashing the fortress of employer domination.

We are now engaged in the work of reconstruction. Towards this end, we are devoting many hours of conscientious effort. The 600 workers actively engaged in the cloak industry here in Portland, Ore., feel that they are a progressive link in the great chain of workers' solidarity, which is our parent organization—the I.L.G.W.U.

KNITTED GARMENT WORKERS HAIL CONVENTION

By J. L. GOLDBERG
Manager Local 155, I.L.G.W.U.

The Knitted Garment Workers' Union, Local 155, one of the youngest members of the International, is a product of the great organizing movement sponsored by the General Executive Board in the historic Summer of 1933. We have had a hard beginning, but have, nevertheless, succeeded in establishing a lively, fighting union in our trade. Union labor conditions are already prevailing in a large number of former sweatshop mills and, though we still need, from time to time, the help of the General Office, we feel confident that we are moving fast ahead.

The jurisdictional dispute with the United Textile Workers was a bitter affair for us, as a young organization, to endure. The tireless work of President Dubinsky in our behalf, however, is winning the day for us in this dispute. There was a great deal of conferring on this aggravated matter, and the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. had called meetings of both parties to the dispute. It took plenty of time and effort on our part to prove to the Council that the jurisdiction over the knitted garment industry rightfully belongs to the I.L.G.W.U. The unfavorable decision of Hugh Frayne was set aside and we won the jurisdiction. Now, it is a matter of arrangement, which should be disposed of in brief time.

A general strike is now looming on our horizon. It may be a stubborn strike, but with the solidarity of the workers in the knitted garment shops assured, victory is practically certain. We shall sweep out the remnants of oppression from the knit-goods mills and array ourselves as a proud division in the great army of our Union.

From the Chicago Convention our voice will go out to reach into every corner of the world. Wherever men and women are toiling for a living our achievements will be an inspiration and an aim.

SEATTLE NOW ALL UNION

By EUGENE GLASER
Secretary Local 28

The cloakmakers of Seattle, Wash., are now 100 per cent organized with a total membership of one hundred and twenty. Union wages and conditions are rigidly enforced in all shops. Every employer has signed a contract with the local, thus enabling the workers to enjoy the full benefits of the trade.

We are, at present, attempting to organize the dress industry which numbers 1,800 persons in this city. A dress union has never been developed in Seattle, and, as a result of this, the dress workers are the lowest paid on the Pacific Coast, with some full-fledged workers receiving as low as five dollars a week. Organizer Rose Pesotta visited our city for three days and plans were made to bring the workers together. A special meeting was called and eighty women responded to the call. At the meeting trade unionism was explained, and the audience enthused over the prospect of having a dress union formed in our city.

The Seattle Local No. 28 is now appealing to the International to have Rose Pesotta come back here to organize the dress trade into a strong union. We have chosen Sister Pesotta because of her successful work in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Portland, and the workers of this city hope that the convention will take the proper action to make it possible for her to return to Seattle to help us in our activities.

The officers of our local are: President—Meyer Rosenberg, Secretary—Eugene Glaser. The Executive Board consists of the following: M. B. Cooper, Hymie Selesnick, Leon Glaser, Dave Martin, Mrs. Peterson, S. M. Jones, Miss Figol, Israel Gold, Mr. Ohrin and Laura Marsteller.

Chicago Astir With Convention Plans

By M. A. GOLDSTEIN
Secretary-Treasurer, Chicago Joint Board

The 22nd Biennial Convention of the I.L.G.W.U., to be held in the City of Chicago beginning May 28, 1934, will go down in our annals as a Jubilee Convention.

The Convention will be a festival to celebrate the revival of our Union's former strength and prestige in the labor movement. We are today in the renaissance period of our existence. Our huge success, both from an organizational and a material point of view, has surprised our best friends and confounded our enemies.

Not So Long Ago

It was not so very long ago, just ten months, in fact, when our country was lying prostrate in the midst of the worst depression in its history, and the labor movement was almost crushed as a result of that crisis. Our organization, too, felt the full force of the economic upheaval and paid its full measure of suffering in consequence. Weakened financially and organizationally, the International and its locals kept up a desperate struggle to preserve the Union. The Union was forced to relinquish many important gains and positions. Its very existence was in danger. Our members endured great sacrifice and suffering with the sole purpose in mind of keeping up the Union.

Just as a ray of hope for better times dawned on the horizon and fresh winds began to blow away the black clouds of depression and heralded the coming of better times, our International was the first organization in the labor movement to take advantage of the opportunity and circumstances of the times not only to regain its lost position, but, with daring courage, marched forward to utilize its strength and energy to improve the conditions of our workers and to brighten the lives of our membership. The earnings of our members were, to a great extent, increased, and a thirty-five hour work-week has been obtained. Tens of thousands of new members have joined the ranks of our organization.

Chicago Is Honored

The Chicago membership of our International is proud to be a part of the great militant organization whose leadership has instilled courage and enthusiasm among the workers of every village, town and hamlet. Chicago is honored at having been selected the banner city of this historical convention. We of Chicago are also proud of the fact that our own Union, in coordinattion with the International, has contributed its part toward the improvement of the conditions of our membership and towards the strengthening of our organization morally and economically.

Our success in organizing the dress industry in this locality is an outstanding achievement in our history. The dress industryy of Chciago, a notoriously non-union stronghold, which for many years had been a thorn in the road of progress of our Union, occupies a large chapter in the history of our International and the Chicago Joint Board—a history of many years of bitter struggle and strife with expenditures of hundreds of thousands of dollars and prison terms for many of our members as a result of bitter strikes.

The ranks of the dressmakers have at last been organized. This occurred last September, after a short, two weeks' strike. Local No. 100, which consists of operators, finishers, examiners, drapers and pinkers, has a membership of close to 5,000 good-standing members. They constitute one of the largest International locals in the Chicago Joint Board. And, in addition, there are the cutters and pressers of the dress industry, affiliated with Locals 81 and 18, respectively.

The dressmakers join with the cloakmakers and the raincoat makers of Chicago in greeting the officers and delegates of the 22nd Biennial Convention and in bidding them Welcome to Chicago! Congratulations, brothers and sisters, upon the good work you have accomplished. Long live the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union! Long live the labor movement!

NEVA VOGT and EMMA VILLANI

FLORENCE SCHMIDT

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

By FLORENCE SCHMIDT
A Member of Local 100

The Convention of our International is being held in our city this month. Let us give three cheers for the I.L.G.W.U. for its marvelous record of achievement.

The 40-hour week and the blanket minimum of $14.00 per week which the NRA gave us are gratefully acknowledged, yet the 35-hour week and the increase in salaries which our Union obtained for us are, by far, more appealing and surely appreciated.

Shorter hours and better wages are, of course, all right, but that is not all the Union did. It is the respect that was gained by so many who toiled in the industry that counts above all. It is the feeling of fraternity that was created among the workers that goes a long way.

All hail to the officers of the I.L.G.W.U. who have worked for the interest of this organization and to our fellow-workers who have lent a helping hand. Loyal cooperation is the secret of success.

BEFORE AND NOW

By EMMA VILLANI
A Chicago Chairlady

Several months ago we sat and worked at our respective trades. Since then history has been written. New laws have been enacted in Washington to help the world of industry. New plans were made by our International to help the workers.

We, dressmakers, should be proud that we are members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. It is one of the strongest unions in the country. We may rest assured that, if our ranks are always as solid and firm as they are today, we need not depend upon government aid for recognition of our rights.

Compare conditions before and after the strike. How well we shall remember the grumbling of dissatisfied workers when a poor price was given for certain garments. No one dared to bring the matter to the attention of the boss, fearing that it might mean the loss of the job.

How different things are now! A price committee settles the garments with the employer in a decent way. The slow and average girl has come out of the $5 and $6 a week class, as was the case in many a shop. Employers do not threaten every complainant with discharge. They are more apt to listen to reason.

One could go on and on comparing the past with the present. However, we all know what we have gained and in our hearts we are both proud and thankful for belonging to our mighty organization.

From Long Island and Staten Island

A "Get-Together" of Chairladies

A dinner was held at the Playground Restaurant in Corona, L. I., on the evening of February 9, at which all the chairladies and executive board members of our Long Island and Staten Island locals celebrated the accomplishments of the Union since the time of the general strike.

The affair was successful from every standpoint and served to strengthen the morale of the members. Brother Harry Wander, Manager of the Out-of-Town Department, addressed the gathering, as did Brother Jack Grossman, manager of the Long Island locals, and several chairladies. A valuable gift was presented to Manager Grossman as a token of appreciation for his work.

Educational and Regular Membership Meetings

The educational activities of our organization began last Winter with a series of meetings and sociables which drew a large attendance that filled the halls to capacity on every occasion. Sister Fannia M. Cohn and Brother S. Romualdi assisted in the proceedings by addressing the meetings and leading the discussions on a number of topics of interest to our workers.

Aside from regular membership meetings, at which the decisions of the executive board are explained and submitted for approval, Manager Grossman has inaugurated in Long Island, to take place once a month, special craft meetings of operators, pressers, etc., for the definite purpose of discussing prices and other work conditions prevailing in the shops. This has received the full approval of the Out-of-Town Department manager and is being encouraged in all the other out-of-town territories.

Staten Island Installation Meeting

On Friday evening, April 27, at the Svea Hall, Port Richmond, Staten Island, the executive board members of Dressmakers' Local 154, whose membership is comprised of all the dressmakers working in Staten Island shops, were inducted into office at a successful ceremony attended by several hundred members. A dance followed and lasted until the wee hours of the morning.

The installation ceremony and the presentation of the charter—Local 154 being the last of the recently organized out-of-town locals to be officially inaugurated—were performed by Vice-President Luigi Antonini, who acted on behalf of President Dubinsky, who was prevented from attending due to the pressure of work. Brother Antonini spoke in English and Italian, and his remarks were greeted with prolonged applause. Other speakers of the evening were: Harry Wander, manager of the Out-of-Town Department, and S. Romualdi; Jack Grossman, manager of the local, presided.

The following members of Local 154 compose our newly-installed executive board: Mrs. Henderson, chairman; Rose Delmonte, secretary; Anna Perrica, Shirley Pisano, Martina Melchiorri, Tessie Fallucca, Mary Merola and Anna Rivera. A selection of popular songs was rendered by Bert Lytell, accompanied at the piano by Bob Pescocello. Representatives of several out-of-town locals were present, including a group of officers of Local 89, Italian dressmakers.

WE ARE THE ENFORCERS

By NEVA VOGT

In the last number of "Justice," I found a letter of a Chicago shop chairlady. I felt that she was right and I am of the opinion that it would be of great value to our large new membership if the shop chairladies would from time to time express their views on the organization.

Until recently, I, too was a shop chairlady of the largest shop in Chicago, namely, Eisenberg & Sons. I would, therefore, like to express a thought or two! The Union is new. The great majority of dress workers in Chicago, including myself, had never at any time previous to our general strike been associated with the Union; yet, we felt that something should be done to enable the workers to emerge from the abominable conditions under which they were working, especially in factories where the cheaper garment was made. Compared with conditions in orther shops, our shop was not so bad. But, we felt that we, too, are entitled to better conditions.

No doubt the NRA helped labor gain a stronger foothold in industry. But all credit is due to the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union for the splendid code that we have in our industry. From the experience I had as a chairlady, I am sure that the workers realize that it is through the Union that they received the thirty-five hour week and fair minimum scales.

Therefore, we dressmakers must not entirely rely upon the code authorities for enforcement of work regulations. It is we who should enforce the code and agreement by united efforts. Staunch backing to our leaders and a solid unit of real Union men and women!

. . The Rise of Local 91 . .

By HARRY GREENBERG
Manager Local 91.

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Seven months ago, Local 91 was one of the smaller locals of the I.L.G.W.U. Today, after a strenuous period of strife and struggle, we are proud and happy to come to the 22nd Convention of our Union as one of the largest locals in the miscellaneous women's garment trades.

We have on our rolls over six thousand members in good standing, paid up to date. The element of our workers is of a kind of which the International may justly be proud. We draw no distinction of color, race or nationality. The chairladies, chairmen and executive board members in our local consist almost equally of Negro, Italian, Spanish and Jewish members. The enthusiasm for their union shown by these groups is remarkable. They participate in nearly every activity of the union; they are eager to take advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the local, such as using the books from the library which we established for them; they come to the classes on trade unionism which we have arranged for them; they take part in the hikes and visits to museums periodically organized for them by our office.

Keep On Growing

We have grown since the strike, and keep on growing daily. Since last Fall, we have organized seventy-five additional shops, and the work still goes on. To accommodate the increased activities of our local, we had to hire additional office space, meeting rooms and other facilities. The most encouraging feature of this awakening among the workers in the children's dress shops is the fact that our present membership comes from groups which, until the last general strike, had had neither knowledge of nor experience in trade union matters. The Italian and colored members, indeed, are among our most devoted and active chairmen and executive board members, and whenever the Union calls upon them they are ready to respond.

We will celebrate our resurrection as a trade union and the progress we have achieved in the past seven months on Saturday, June 23rd, at a river boat excursion, for which occasion our Local has chartered a special steamer large enough to accommodate our members and their friends and families and to give them a glorious day of outdoor fun.

Our members took a conspicuous part in the May First celebration under the banners of Local 91 and the I.L.G.W.U.

Bathrobe Trade Next

We admit that our task is not yet fully completed. While a great portion of the children's dress industry is organized, there are still a number of shops that have to be brought under union control of work conditions. We are preparing for a general strike in the bathrobe industry. In the bathrobe shops thousands of men and women are still exploited, working unlimited hours and earning very low wages; the code in that industry, true, calls for only 40 hours of weekly work and for a $15 minimum, but these regulations are flagrantly being violated in nearly every factory.

If we are to take as a criterion the gains and advances made by us in the past half-year, we may safely predict that, by the end of this year, Local 91 will come to the front with a membership of 10,000. This is the convention message we wish to deliver to our members and to our fellow trade unionists in the I.L.G.W.U. We have a solid, healthy and united organization and we are looking forward to unbroken progress and achievement.

All Convention Messages should be addressed: Medinah Michigan Avenue Club, Chicago, Ill.

Mother Union

By DAVID S. SCHICK

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Merry time it is in May
The fowls sing her lay
The knights love the tourney
Maidens dance and play.
—Ancient English ballad.

The admirable practice of celebrating May Day dates back to the almost prehistoric festivals of Egypt and India in which the tillers of the soil and the warriors wro consumed the fruit of the soil rejoiced upon the co-operative efforts of the Sun and Earth that so fertilely supplied all of man's needs.

These ancient peoples were simple folk and grateful, with a polite habit of recognizing good things and thanking those responsible for them. They did not believe, simple as they were, that they alone, individually, could get what they wanted nor did they think that all things, including corn and cabbages, come to him who sits and dreams in the shade.

Therefore, they acknowledged annually their debt to Mother Earth, took pains to treat her well, never spoke against her and made her feel like one of the tribe.

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In the course of a few centuries, however, life became more complicated and in the hustle and bustle of adjusting themselves in the changes from tribal living to feudalism and later, incipient capitalism, men and women lost sight of their just debts and creditor and the celebration of May Day changed accordingly.

It is not so very long since the following customs might have been witnessed on May Day even so far south as Perthshire, England.

All the youths of a township or village met on the nearest moor. They cut a round table or altar in the green sod, and in the trench thus formed about the altar the whole company stationed themselves. Here they kindled a fire and dressed a repast of eggs and milk, of the consistency of a custard. At the same time, they kneaded a cake of oatmeal, which they baked on the embers.

After the custard was eaten they divided the cake into as many portions as there were persons in the company. One of these portions was blackened over with charcoal. Then all the pieces were thrown into a bonnet. The company, blindfolded, drew out each a piece, the holder of the bonnet took the last bit, and the drawer of the back bit was made to leap three times through the flame of the bonfire.

In the ceremony as originally performed by worshippers of Baal, the persons who took the blackened piece were literally sacrificed as a propitiatory offering to Baal for the productiveness of the ensuing Autumn.

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The Irish still retain the Phoenician custom of lighting fires at short distances and making the cattle pass between them. Fathers, too, taking their children in their arms, jump or run through them, thus passing the latter, as it were, through the flames. The custom appears to have been only a substitute for the atrocious sacrifice of children practised by the elder Phoenicians, that "abomination of the heathen" denounced in 11 Kings XVI.

The god Saturn—that is, Moloch—was represented by a statute bent slightly forward and so placed that the least weight was sufficient to alter its position. Into the arms of this idol the priest gave the child to be sacrificed, when its balance being thus destroyed, it flung, or rather dropped the victim into a fiery furnace that blazed below.

Roman paganism has left its firmest traces upon the May Day celebrations in the Anglo-Saxon regions. There the occasion is rather a feast of flowers than of sacrifices, a reminiscence of Flora rather than of Baal and Moloch.

Other observances were gradually added. The May Queen was crowned and held one day's away over her court, consisting of morris-dancers, of Robin Hood and his band, and generally of the villagers or townspeople. A pasteboard hobby-horse ridden by a man who sent around among the spectators to collect contributions in a ladle, stuck in its mouth. Everybody who wished might dance around [illegible].

The Maypole was usually made of birch, and adorned with flowers and ribbons. In the villages it was often set up for the occasion on May Day Eve, but in London and elsewhere there were Maypoles permanently standing in the streets. It was only natural that the May revels should invite the condemnation of the Puritans. Stubbes in his "Anatomy of Abuses" amiably characterized the Maypole as a "stinckying idol" which the people bring from the woods, "following it with great devotion." And when they have set it up they "leape and daunce aboute it, as the heathen people did at the dedication of their idolles."

Maypoles were forbidden to be erected by the Roundhead Parliament in 1644; but they were returned on the restoration of Charles II and in 1661 the famous Maypole in the Strand was reared with much ceremony and rejoicing. This pole, which stood near where Catherine Street joins the Strand, was of cedar, and was raised by twelve seamen, commanded by the Duke of York who was then Lord High Admiral of England.

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It has remained for labor all over the world to restore to the celebration of May Day its original charm, dignity and true meaning—a listing of benefits received, an acknowledgment of their source and a prayerful determination for their undamaged and undiminished continuance.

True, organized labor does not celebrate May Day as a thank-you party to Mother Earth for bumper crops. The spirit of the occasion, however, has been restored.

This May Day and for many May Days to come, members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and members of other unions gathered joyously to pay homage to Mother Union, thank her for all the blessings that from her flow—higher wages, shorter hours, greater leisure, security of job and life—and again uttered with high resolve the pledge that Mother Union, well tended and cared for and assisted by her appreciative sons and daughters, will continue to shower her fruitful bounty on the world of the workers.

President Dubinsky, Vice-Presidents Breslaw and Nagler in Van of First of May Parade in New York

THE FIRST OF MAY

By Nahum Yood

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Liwe sweeping storms bold and free,
From land to land, from sea to sea,
We carry lord and serf away,
To celebrate the Workers' Day.
We come,
We come.

With pangs of hunger in the eye,
With heavy heart and stifled cry,
From city and from countryside,
In vigorous and measured stride,
We come,
We come.

And shouldering the glorious strife
For higher peaks of human life,
We heaven down to earth will bring,
In one intrepid mighty swing.
We come,
We come.

In Connecticut and Westchester Towns

TWO MORE DRESS LOCALS INAUGURATED IN CONNECTICUT

By a Staff Reporter

Eight months after the conclusion of the general strike, we still had in Connecticut two locals which had not yet been officially installed. This is accounted for by the fact that the Union was so busy with regular activities that there was no time left to complete all installations.

Installation Meeting in Bridgeport

On Wednesday, March 8, over 800 dressmakers of Local No. 152, assembled in MooseTemple, Bridgeport, Conn., to inaugurate their local and install the members of the executive committee.

The meeting-hall was crowded to overflowing and was presided over by Brother Bernard Schub, State organizer. The meeting was addressed by Margaret di Maggio of Local 89, S. Romualdi of the International office, Mr. Fred Cederholm, president of the Bridgeport Central Trades and Labor Council, John Egan, secretary of the State Federation of Labor, Jasper McLevy, Socialist mayor of Bridgeport, and Vice-President Luigi Antonini, who installed the officers and presented the charter on behalf of President David Dubinsky, who was prevented from attending by urgent conferences in Washington.

The executive board installed by Brother Antonini consists of: Tessie Castelli, chairman; Emma Sundbey, vice-chairman; Lydia Marazita, secretary; Nellie Wilson, Rose Conti and Frieda Schlesinger.

A Gala Night in Stamford

Very elaborate and successful was the installation ceremony of Local 146 of Stamford, which took place on Friday evening, April 13, at the Masonic Temple. The auditorium was, literally, packed, with flowers banked high on the stage. It would appear that our brothers and sisters of Stamford—almost all of Italian stock—are exceedingly musical, for, during the entire ceremony, it was one continuous succession of singers and players, all of them workers in dress shops.

Manager Harry Wander of the Out-of-Town Department presented the charter and officially installed the executive board of the local. Various speakers were: S. Romualdi, Sadie Reich, William Barcan, Miss Dora Caporini, George Moffat, secretary of the Stamford Central Trades and Labor Council, and the Mayor of the City, Joseph Boyle, who made an impassioned appeal for the adoption of the 30-hour week as a means to reduce unemployment. Telegraphic greetings were received from President David Dubinsky, Fannia M. Cohn of the Educational Department and Brother Abe Staum of the Out-of-Town Department.

Contributing to the musical program of the evening were Mattie Caruso, a little girl of promising ability; Rose Senti, soprano, and Mary Bocchetta, pianist, both members of the local; Jennie Itri, also a union member, who sang from the classics, accompanied by Professor V. Di Vito at the piano; Vincenzo Bocchetta, baritone; Mary Baroni, of Newark, and Martha Valerino, active member of our Bridgeport local. Dance numbers were rendered by four young girls, Marietta Longo, Janet Cesario, Rose Barone and Grace Mancusi. Bernard Shub, Connecticut organizer for the International, served as master of ceremonies.

The following are the members of Local 146's executive board: Miss Dora Caporini, chairman; Mrs. Minnie Annunziata, vice-chairman; Susie Sessa, secretary; Rocco Bruno, Sally Arainco, Jennie Itri, Mollie Gerardi, L. Triacca, Mrs. Metallo, Susie Sabato, Delia Johnson, Nina Berlingo, Jane Centonze, Anna Guglie, Mary Serino, Mrs. Mary Parisi.

A Good Lesson to a "Chiseler"

The situation in the dress and corset locals of Connecticut is very good. The workers are showing a remarkable spirit and are appreciative of the work that the Union is accomplishing. We still have some non-union cloak shops in Connecticut, which claim that they live up to code regulations. The following incident will prove how much trust can be placed in some of these employers and how they take advantage of the workers in shops where there is no union control:

Sorokin & Weinstock of New Britain, Conn., was one of the five manufacturers who applied for an injunction against the code. Following settlement of the legal dispute, this firm promised to observe all code provisions. However, when Inspector A. Paonessa of the State Labor Department visited this shop one pay day and examined the pay envelopes and entries in the payroll book, he found that while wages recorded in the book were up to the code minimums, the actual amounts discovered in the pay envelopes were much less. This resulted in the arrest of the owners who were later sentenced to a $100 fine for keeping inaccurate records, plus the cost of the trial.

INTENSIVE EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED BY MT. VERNON LOCAL

By Rocco Longabucco,
Corresponding Secretary, Local 143

In my first correspondence, I wish to outline briefly the history of the garment workers of Westchester County. Before the advent of the Union, it was the old story: long hours, small pay and unbearable working conditions. The employers had the workers believing that the Union was a "big bad wolf," primarily interested in their dues. Naturally, when agitation was started in order to organize the workers of Westchester, the leaders of the Union met with difficulties. Meetings were small and discouraging. But small meetings did not discourage Brother Harry Wander, manager of the Out-of-Town Department, and Sister Marie Bonanno. They kept on agitating and working till the Union was fully organized in Westchester.

Today, under the able guidance of Brother Louis Reiff, manager, and Brother Velardi, business agent, we have, I can say without hesitation, one of the most outstanding locals in the out-of-town districts. The local takes in five towns: Mt. Vernon, Yonkers, New Rochelle, White Plains and Portchester, New York. Our membership is making rapid strides, considering the short time it has been in the Union, and is fast learning the meaning of unionism. Our membership is learning that the "big bad wolf" is not a bad wolf at all; they realize that since the coming of the Union, they have actually been treated like human beings. Sweatshop conditions are a thing of the past and beggarly wages have followed suit. In the last stoppage, the Union's officials had the opportunity to witness this progress when, without question or hesitation, the membership stopped work in an experienced and disciplined manner, something which would have seemed impossible only eight months ago.

Additional Shops Organized

Some time after the strike when the office began functioning normally again, we turned our attention to about 6 shops which so far had succeeded in escaping organization. One of these was in Port Chester, employing over 200 workers; then there was a blouse shop in New Rochelle, a blouse and a dress shop in White Plains and 2 shops in Yonkers. After a little difficulty, these were finally organized. We have at the present time but two shops which are proving stubborn to unionization. However, steps are being taken towards organizing them, too.

The fact that Yonkers takes in some very large shops has necessitated the opening of a branch office after working hours in that city. This office is supervised by Sister Esther Gordon, who collects dues and receives complaints.

Surprise Banquet in Honor of Local Manager

Two notable events have taken place in our Mt. Vernon Union: one was the mass-meeting held for the presentation of our charter; the other was a mass-meeting on February 23rd of the Westchester membership which numbers over 1,200 at present. Reports of these two events have already been published in previous issues of "Justice."

A third and memorable event occurred on March 10 in the form of a surprise banquet in honor of our manager, Brother Louis Reiff. There were some 300 members present on that occasion, and a beautiful gift, a write watch, was presented to Brother Reiff, Sister Sadie Basile making the official presentation. Among the guests present were: Brother Harry Wander, manager of the Out-of-Town Department; Sister Fannia M. Cohn, Brothers A. Staum, William Altman, Frank Liberti, Jack Grossman and S. Romualdi, who delivered addresses, as did Sisters Lora Di Guglielmo and Paolina Paladino of our local organization. Brother Anthony Richardi acted as toastmaster. Messages were received from International President David Dubinsky and Vice-President Julius Hochman.

Several Educational Meetings

We have already held several educational meetings, all of which turned out very successfully. The first was held on Tuesday, March 6, at the Socialist Hall, 26 East First Street, Mt. Vernon, to which only a limited number could be invited due to small accommodations. Those members who were invited responded enthusiastically. Two hundred fifty sisters and brothers filled the hall to capacity. Brother Reiff presided and Sister Fannia M. Cohn addressed the gathering on the importance of these meetings. She promised to send various groups to the different meetings, which were held immediately after work.

A similar meeting was held in Yonkers on Tuesday, March 13, at the Jewish Community Center. One hundred fifty members attended. Brother Reiff was in the chair and the meeting was addressed by Fannia M. Cohn who introduced Brother Serafino Romualdi. The latter delivered a talk first in English and then translated it into Italian. A similar third meeting was held in White Plains on March 23 at the Mt. Carmel Church, which was addressed by the same speakers. Refreshments are served at these meetings and a fine spirit prevades the assemblages.

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Our executive board is performing its tasks admirably. Meetings are held twice a month at which daily problems are discussed and acted upon. And to those of our members who commit violations is convincingly brought home the fact that Local No. 143 will not tolerate any break-down of its hard-earned work conditions.

OUT-OF-TOWN CLOAKMAKERS ORGANIZE COMMITTEES

All the members of Cloakmakers' Union, Local 36, working in the shops of Mr. Vernon and Yonkers, were summoned to a general meeting on Thursday, March 15, to discuss ways and means of enforcing the observance of union hours and pay rates in their shops.

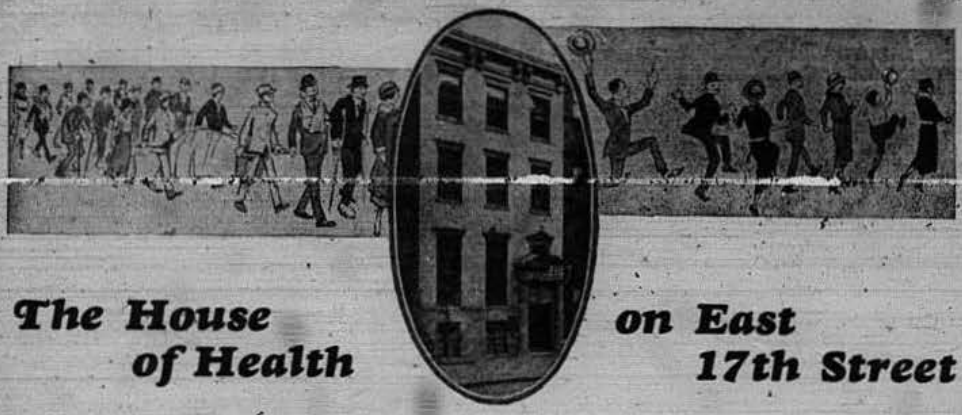
The meeting was attended by Brother Harry Wander, manager of the Out-of-Town Department, and Brother Mayersky, who, as business agent, supervises these cloak shops. It was decided to elect an executive committee for the local, composed of two delegates from each shop, and the first task agreed upon was the policing of the shops on Saturdays and after regular working hours on week-days, to prevent violation of union hours in which some of the workers seem to have indulged.

A meeting of the cloakmakers of Westchester County had previously taken place in Mt. Vernon, where it was attempted to form a Joint Advisory Committee, representing all the shops of Yonkers, Mt. Vernon and New Rochelle. However, it was impossible to reach an agreement satisfactory to everyone concerned and, therefore, Yonkers and Mt. Vernon are now conducting their business separately.

Cloakmakers of Passaic Meet

In order to discuss with the members the existing conditions in the cloak shops and in view of the necessity of creating an efficient committee to police the shops and prevent working overtime and on Saturdays, the Out-of-Town Department called a meeting of all the cloakmakers working in Passaic, N. J., on Tuesday, March 27, at the Polish People's Home.

The meeting was well attended, over 500 members being present. Brothers Frank Liberti and Antonio Crivello, managers of the dressmakers' unions of Passaic and Newark, respectively, addressed the audience and were followed by Organizer Anna Kula. Brother Harry Wander, manager of the Out-of-Town Department, presided at the meeting and led the discussion on the matter of creating some sort of a control committee. A number of members participated in the discussion and offered suggestions which were duly taken up. It was then decided to elect a control committee, composed of two members from each shop, with definite instructions to see to it that union conditions and regulations be observed in all the shops and by all the members.



The House of Health on East 17th Street

By GEORGE M. PRICE, M. D.
Director Union Health Center

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Have you ever been to the House of Health on 17th Street, near Irving Place? Have you seen the four-story building with the red brick front and the engraving on the stone over the door, "For the Members of the I.L.G.W.U."? Stand across the street on a Saturday forenoon and you will be astonished to see what a very busy place this is; what a pilgrimage it seems to attract; what a mass of people go through its modest doors; how many thousands of workers come here from the East side and the West side—from all parts of this great metropolis. What are they seeking here?

Why Do They Come?

Let us stop inside and see what these people are searching for. As you go into the vestibule on the right and left, there are two large plaques of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. In the large registration room there are half a dozen registrars and nurses, and dozens of people registering their names and anxiously inquiring where they can get assistance and attention.

"Where shall I go to be operated upon?" "How shall I dispose of my mentally ill son?" "What sanitarium should a consumptive go to?" Where must I make an application for an operation?" "Who is the best man to operate on gall bladder?" "I want a doctor to tell me how my blood pressure is." "I want an X-ray." "I want a test for my heart." "What shall I do for my infected finger?" These are some of the questions anxiously asked of and courteously answered by a competent staff.

Why do they come here? Why do they flock to this place? Why do the old and young, men and women, aged and children, crowd our waiting rooms? Because this is the Unions' Health Center. It is a medical institution established and founded by the I.L.G.W.U. It is managed and directed by a representative of the workers, for the workers, and by the workers. Here the workers feel that they are not being misled, their ills not exaggerated, their diseases properly diagnosed and their ills attended to (if not entirely relieved). Thirty thousand calls a year, about a hundred a day, about fifty a session, and at certain times, on Saturdays, 300 patients in the three hours of the morning!

A Square Deal For Patient

What is this Union Health Center? What kind of an institution is it? What does it represent? Who are its sponsors, its patients? Who owns it? How long has it been in existence, and why is it so popular?

The Union Health Center is a pioneer in Health Movement among organized workers. It is twenty-one years old, having been established in 1913. It is a Center where all the latest medical and dental diagnostic apparata have been assembled; where there are competent physicians, dentists and nurses attending to the thousands of ill workers; and where the patients feel that they get a square deal, because it is their own union that has organized it, that maintains and supports it.

The I.L.G.W.U. was an advance guard in the new constructive departure in health work. It was the first union to become "health-conscious", that was convinced that the health of the worker is his best and only asset, and that without health the worker can be neither a worker nor a union member. The Health Movement in the International had begun in 1909 and 1910 against the sweatshops, unsanitary conditions and fire perils of the shops in the garment industry.

The International was the first to curb the spread of the sweatshop. It was the first to propose a constructive method of controlling sanitary conditions by creating the Joint Board of Sanitary Control. The health work was an extension of the sanitary work. It was an inevitable step in the progress of union control of all work conditions in the ladies' garment factories.

In his book, "The Women's Garment Workers," Dr. Louis Levine, speaking about the health activities of the Union, writes: "The Union Health Center is the only institution of its kind in the American Labor Movement, and the International takes pride in its organization and development. The Center has brought the problem of health conservation closer to the attention of the workers."

One of Its Kind

But why a Health Center? What need is there fore a special health institution among workers? Why are medical and dental clinics for workers necessary, and what good are they expected to do?

The sick we always have with us. It is a fact that, on an average, the worker—and every member of his family—is sick at least one week during each year, thus having to bear the affliction of about four weeks of sickness annually. The worker is totally ignorant of health and medical matters. He does not know what good medicine or dentistry is—what physician to call to help him in his sickness. A word of advice from a well-meaning neighbor may induce him to seek help from a medical fakir, a dental charlatan or, perhaps, a bogus practitioner, or to dose himself or his family with patent medicines.

The worker makes no provision for sickness. It is not an item in his budget. He insures himself against fire, against death, but not against sickness. When sickness does come he is helpless. He has no means. He pawns his watch or ring; he borrows from his relatives and neighbors, or seeks help from charity. If he has some means, the worker soon finds out that medicine is an expensive article; that the fee for doctors, nurses and dentists is more than he can afford to pay, and that he is compelled to purchase cheap food, clothing, etc. At present only the rich can afford to obtain good medical assistance. The poor have to go to charity for it.

Are more reasons needed to agitate for health betterment? Is it a wonder that the workers appreciate an institution which is their own, which is managed and directed by their own representatives in whom they have faith and confidence? If the workers were more sensible, they would be convinced that in health, as well as in economics, their salvation depends upon themselves, and nobody else,—the workers would combine and pay an adequate sum (which need not be large) annually on the insurance plan, and have their own hospitals, clinics and medical and dental help.

No Longer An Experiment

Local No. 35, Cloak Pressers, was the first among the locals of the International to introduce Tuberculosis and Sick Benefits, and to agitate for a workers' clinic. Its progressive leaders, Sigman, Kazan, Breslaw and others, were the pioneers in the health movement. Later, other locals of the International, Nos. 9, 1, 22 and 23 joined the movement. At first a clinic was established in connection with the Joint Board of Sanitary Control, at 31 Union Square, and was limited to the examination of sick benefit cases, to applicants for tuberculosis benefit and to candidates for union membership. Later, general and special medical clinics were established. In 1917, a Dental Department was added. In 1920, $60,000 were raised by six locals. The house on 17th Street was bought and reconstructed and has since remained in operation.

Since the establishment of the Union Health Center, there have been examined therein 75,000 applicants of the Union. Over 125,000 patients were treated there—this in the Medical Department alone. The Dental Department during its 14 years of existence had an income of over a million dollars, and gave treatment annually to about 6,000 workers.

Besides medical, dental and general health assistance, diagnostic tests, X-rays, etc., the Union Health Center has also, from its inception, conducted an intensive health propaganda to teach workers the value of their health, the need for periodic medical and dental examinations, and for taking care of their health while they are well, instead of waiting until it is too late.

The Union Health Center is no longer an experiment. It is recognized by the medical and dental professions and praised by social workers. It was highly commended by labor leaders like Gompers, Green, Sullivan. It has come to stay as a monument to the progressive vision of the leaders of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

Sweatshops Flourish in 'Frisco Chinatown

Chinese Dressmaker Girls on Way to Work

A Typical Sub-Cellar Dress Shop in San Francisco

Garment Union Comes to Negro Worker

By EDITH KINE

If one were to hazard the suggestion, a year ago, that in April, 1934, thousands of Negro women and men would be solid blocks of organized workers within an established A. F. of L. needle trades' union, he would have been dismissed as little short of visionary. Such a sceptical—or realistic—attitude would have been perfectly justified nevertheless. Until last year Negro workers, in an organizational sense, had been distinctly on the outer side of the periphery in the great women's garment industry. Not that there were no Negroes in the dressmakers' or white goods workers' union until the Summer of 1933. A sprinkling of them, of a wide-awake, altruistic strain, had percolated into these organizations several years ago and their presence in these unions of white girls and men was not only tolerated—it was pointed at occasionally with a pride which had the unmistakable veneer of showmanship.

A Prejudice Shattered

En masse, however, the Negroes in the garment trades were considered as poor organizable material. This prejudice—not unlike a superstition—had not been weakened in 1930 and in 1932, when fervent appeals by the leadership of the Dressmakers' Union of New York, an affiliate of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, to join in general strikes failed to make an impression on the Negro workers in the dress shops. In Chicago, Philadelphia and elsewhere where Negro workers are employed in dress shops, the experience was similar.

Yet, the selfsame Negro women and men came down from their shops literally in the thousands in August, 1933, joined the Union, and have since become integrated as inseparable parts of the organized shop units.

This metamorphosis has come about so quickly that it is difficult to ascribe it to any one factor. The fact, nevertheless, remains that today, for the first time since Negroes have entered industry, they are, at least in one major industry, on a footing of equality with their white fellow workers. Color is no longer a factor, in the needle trades shop, in determining wages or hours of work. The Negro workers, not singly but as an entire group, are no longer viewed with distrust or dislike as possible strike-breakers or as cheap labor.

NRA—A Santa Claus?

Is it fair to state that it was the NRA that was responsible for this literal upheaval in the status of the Negro worker in the women's apparel shops? Has the Recovery Act played eccentric Santa Claus to the West Harlem of New York or the South Side of Chicago, leaving in thousands of workers' homes not a vagrant windfall but permanent security of wage equality and employment opportunity?

On the face of outward facts no other answer seems possible. Yet, the perspective of this change would be woefully inadequate were we to rest it solely on the impetus furnished by the NRA. The truth is that in the Summer of 1933, by the time the first industrial codes were beginning to shape up on the horizon, employment conditions had hit bottom in all industry—and in the garment trades in particular—affecting with frightful severity not only the Negro workers but the white workers as well. It was not merely the Negro workers in the garment shops who were being exploited to a breaking point—tens of thousands of white dress workers—Jews, Italians, Hungarians, Poles and natives—had been reduced to a sweatshop level in nearly every market the country over. And it was not the Negro workers alone who had stayed away from the union at that time. In New York City, out of the 90,000 dress shop workers, not more than 20,000 were on the roll of the Union, while the preponderant majority kept either aloof or was pronouncedly anti-union.

Menace Vanishes

Another sidelight should not be ignored in considering the NRA potentialities for the Negro workers, especially during the early stages. There appeared, at that time, in many an industry, the distinct menace that the employers, forbidden by code terms to exploit Negroes as they had in the past, would not hesitate to dismiss colored workers and replace them by white workers. This obvious danger, by the way, has not entirely disappeared in many trades, but insofar as the garment industry is concerned, it was obviated by the swift turn of events let loose upon the initiative of workers' organization.

As the codes were being forged over and shaped in Washington, an avalanche of organizing campaigns and strikes, under the direction of the I. L. G. W. U., began to inundate the women's garment shops. The dress strike in New York, a touchstone of this union movement in 1933, brought down nearly 60,000 formerly non-union workers from the shops into the Union halls, and along with this great mass came thousands of Negro workers, excited, enthusiastic, with song on their lips and an augury of a miraculous change in their hearts. This spontaneous response of the Negro workers to the strike call has since proved a great boon to themselves as their wages have been doubled, their work-week astoundingly shortened and, most important of all, they have for the first time come to enjoy a feeling of genuine economic equality with white women workers. No better proof of this allegation may be furnished than by the fact that since August, 1933, quite a number of Negro girls have been selected in several shops—with mixed colored and white working staffs—as shop "chairladies," heretofore an unheard of honor to the workers of the Negro race.

Backgrounds, Cues

A little more of the background of Negro labor history may be in place to light up the current race facet of worker relations in the garment shops and to offer a cue to their possible unfolding.

Until the days of the World War, Negro women, in the less industrialized sections, were employed almost wholly in farm work, while in the cities they were being [illegible] personal service, and in each case they were flagrantly underpaid. On the whole, Negro women were considered incapable of factory and other so-called skilled labor. In many parts of the country the whites resented the competition of cheap Negro labor, and refused to work with them. But during the War, because of the universal shortage of labor, Negro women were permitted and even urged to enter the manufacturing pursuits in large numbers, although mainly in unskilled jobs. But even in those golden days they were concentrated in unorganizable occupations, and were victims of economic exploitation and discrimination which resulted in unequal pay despite a satisfactory standard of efficiency.

In the natural course of events, Negro women began trickling into the dress and allied shop industries, but even in these trades they were regarded with suspicion and distrust by the white workers, in those years largely Jewish women, [illegible] upon the Negro girls as prospective strike-breakers and as an element that would eventually degrade working conditions. The fact is that in 1927, during an exciting strike of dress workers which lasted 26 weeks, they were brought into the shops of Chicago as strike-breakers. With that, they were stigmatized, and later they were largely employed as all-around help, cleaners, examiners, etc. The I. L. G. W. U. had made every effort to include them in the Union but with little success.

Two or three years afterward, Negro women began to be employed as ironers, and later as finishers, but they were never employed as operators, and but a handful of them work at the machines even today. The Negro garment worker, however, made the best of the little she had gained, and became very adept as finisher, trimmer, examiner and ironer. Employers did not hesitate to hire them in larger numbers during periods of labor troubles, for they worked for lower wages and were regarded as non-aggressive and docile. In the shops, they were usually separated from the white workers.

The walkout of the Negro women dressmakers on August 16, 1933, together with the white workers, in one fell swoop upturned these glaring inequalities. Nearly 4,000 joined Local 22 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union during that memorable week, a phenomenal jump from the 600 Negroes who had been members until that time. And Section 7a of the Recovery Act, giving the right to all employees to deal collectively with employers through repre[illegible] of their own choosing made the Negroes confident that they were not jeopardising their jobs by fighting for better working conditions and a living wage.

New Negro Recruits

These new Negro recruits in Local 22 are employed mostly as finishers in the better dress houses where finishing is an essential part of the garment. Until the strike, their average pay ran from $10 to $13 for a 50 or a 53-hour week. As a result of the strike and their Union affiliations, their earnings have nearly doubled. Today they start with $22.75 as a guaranteed minimum wage for 35 hours of work, and the majority earn more than that. Negro women workers in the dress industry are among the best paid of their race in Harlem, where they have a Union branch of their own. They take an active part in the executive activity of the dressmakers' organization and have four delegates on the Executive Board—(Lillian Gaskin, Violet Williams, [illegible] and Edith Ransom).

The Dress Pressers' Union, Local 60 of the I. L. G. W. U., has 550 colored members who are ironers of dresses, most of whom are women. To them, the Union has been a Cinderella tale come true. Formerly exploited menials, they are now the highest wage-earners among the women of Negro Harlem. A recent investigation showed that the wages of these pressers have nearly trebled in the past eight months. Where once $18 was considered a good week's wages, now $45 and $50 a week is thought only normal—and this for a 35-hour week! Dress pressing is a difficult trade and requires considerable speed and skill, and the greater the speed the greater the amount earned.

These Negro women are extremely enthusiastic members of the Union. At a recent meeting in Renaissance Casino, 138th Street and 7th Avenue, this enthusiasm was obvious on every face and was expressed in shouts and applause for the speakers who were both black and white.

The Country Over

A few more facts.

One thousand colored women have joined the underwear workers' organization, Local 62 of the I. L. G. W. U., since last August. These girls are mostly quite young. They are pressers and earn

Edith Ransom, Eldica Riley, Lillian Gaskin, Violet Williams

as much as the white girls—not as much as the girls in the dress shops, but fair subsistence wages. Within that local they are looked upon as an unusually intelligent group. In many instances they have been appointed by their fellow-workers, both black and white, as spokesmen for the shop before the employer and as the Union's representative on the [illegible] trust and responsibility.

There is the same spirit of equality in the children's dress trade, where about 900 Negro women belong to Local 91. They are considered "one of the best elements of the organization," in the words of Harry Greenberg, manager of the local. Most of them are ironers, and a few are operators. Eight of them are chairladies of their respective shops, and three of them are on the executive board of the local union.

The embroidery workers' organization, Local 66, reports that they have 100 Negro men and women in the machine and Bonnaz embroidery shops where they receive equal pay with the white workers.

The same story comes from Chicago and Philadelphia of standardized and improved wage levels. In the dress workers' organization, Local 100, in Chicago, there are 500 Negro girls, all dependable union workers, and most of them are new members. They, too, joined the Union on the wave of the general strike in the dress industry last August.

Thousands of Negro women in Chicago are working in the cotton and wash goods dress shops, but they are still unorganized. Although they are working under the Cotton Garment Code regulations, they enjoy small benefits from them, for in those shops code rules are honored largely in the breach. As there is no union control of conditions in these shops, the 40-hour week is stretched to 48 and $13 minimum wage is being systematically whittled down with or without pretext.

The Union in Chicago is now conducting an organized drive among these workers and is employing the pulpits of the Negro churches in the factory districts among other educational devices for interesting these workers in a trade union. The employers have not hesitated to raise the race issue against the Union organizers by telling the Negro workers that they will lose their jobs if the Union succeeds in organizing the shops, for the Union will replace them with white workers.

In Philadelphia, nearly 1,000 Negro girls belong to the well-organized dress union of that city, and they, too, enjoy complete equality of pay and working conditions with the white employees.

Future Prospects

The organized group of women in the garment industry, of course, is but a small part of the great mass of Negro workers in the United States, still unorganized and working largely under codes which offer scant protection against greed and exploitation.

There can, nevertheless, be hardly two opinions concerning the significance of the achievements of this group not only for themselves but for the Negro worker as a whole. The fact that this successful organization movement among the Negro workers is not confined to one city, but extends to Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Los Angeles, offers proof that the trade union appeal is finding a deep, widespread root among them. At the next convention of the national organization, with which they are affiliated, in Chicago, late in May, it is expected that not less than twenty Negro delegates will attend.

Their fellow white members in the I. L. G. W. U. appear to have full faith in the loyalty and militancy of their Negro shop associates. There is, nevertheless, not entirely absent the feeling that the test of ultimate allegiance is yet to come. When the next move comes—on the offensive or the defensive—will the Negro workers, still relatively new in the Union, measure up to the full code of labor's fighting ethics or will they be found wanting?

The overwhelming consensus of opinion appears to be that the Negro garment workers will stick to their union guns.

—Reprinted from Opportunity, Journal of Negro Life.

Thirty-five Years Ago—And Before

By ABRAHAM ROSENBERG
President I.L.G.W.U. 1908-1914

With all of you—old and young—I was [illegible] the General Executive Board had decided to make this forthcoming convention of the International a jubilee convention, marking its 35 years as a part of the general labor movement of America.

To me, however, who remembers the earlier days of the cloakmakers' organization in New York and elsewhere, this year—1934—seems appropriate for celebrating the 50th anniversary of the pioneer efforts of the workers in our industry to found a modest home for themselves, which later, after years of travail and struggle, resulted in the rearing of the present-day "skyscraper," the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

The First Big Battle

It was in 1884, when the New York cloakmakers fought their first big battle. Few remain today who recall that struggle, but those who still remember it will testify that it was a great fight. Unfortunately, in those days, unions in the garment trades would grow up like mushrooms overnight, before a strike. It would seem as if the purpose of forming a union then was to mobilize the people for a strike, obtain some paper gains and thereafter let the whole business go by the board and sink back into the frightful work conditions which prevailed in the factories.

Not until 1889 did the cloakmakers begin to think in earnest of another strike attempt in the New York market. By that time, we already had in New York the United Hebrew Trades, which sent over a committee, with Joseph Barondess at the head, to help us organize our forces. We recruited about 8,000 men into our ranks, carried out a number of preliminary shop strikes, and ran headlong into a lockout which lasted 16 weeks. We won that fight against the employers, but in the following few months, the manufacturers succeeded in involving several of our leaders, including our manager, Joseph Barondess, in criminal prosecutions, and our organization went on the rocks. Whatever was left of them, went to pieces later in the so-called Grover Cleveland depression of 1892.

Week-Work 40 Years Ago

I wonder how many of the present members of the I.L.G.W.U. know that 40 years ago, in 1894, the cloakmakers of New York City became engaged for the first time in their history, in a stubborn struggle for week-work. It was not a successful strike and it lasted nearly 40 weeks, but it stirred public opinion as nothing else connected with the lives of our workers had until then.

The strike for week-work in 1894 came after business began to improve following the bitter crisis of 1892-1893. By July of that year, our organization found [illegible] with a membership of nearly 20,000. We began improving conditions in all factories and things were running well for us. The employers, however, soon began to retaliate by chiseling prices, substituting higher-priced garments for cheaper garments on which prices were settled at lower rates,—so much so, that within a few weeks the trade became involved in a bitter snarl, and this provoked a general strike, obviously the thing the manufacturers were aiming at.

The details of that fight I have described at length in my book, "The Cloakmakers and Their Unions," published several years ago. So I do not intend to dwell upon them in these brief notes. Suffice it, however, to say that despite the courage and the sacrifice displayed by the individual workers and their leaders on the picket lines, the battle for week-work was lost after months and months of striking. And the loss of the strike meant, as it invariably did in those days, the loss of the union and of its membership.

The Birth Of I.L.G.W.U.

We got together, in December, 1899, our first conference, to which came delegates from Baltimore, Philadelphia, Newark, and from a group in Brownsville, Brooklyn. That conference decided to form an international union and to join the American Federation of Labor. It was also decided to take into our international, unions of waist and dressmakers in addition to cloakmakers. We at once elected Herman Grossman, a New York cloak operator, as president, and Bernard Braff, a presser, as secretary, and applied to the A. F. of L. for a charter.

This charter was granted to us and we held our first convention in June, 1900. It took place in Philadelphia and was attended by two locals from New York, two from Philadelphia, one from Baltimore, one from Newark, and one from Brownsville. As our national officers were to serve without pay, the international per capita was fixed at 1 cent a week per member. And when, at the next convention which was held in New York the following year, our treasurer reported that his exchequer held the staggering sum of $13.40, the delegates rewarded him with deafening applause.

The Union Grew

During that interval, however, our union grew pretty fast. We issued a number of charters to local unions—in Chicago, Cleveland and even distant San Francisco—and one to the New York cutters, then Local 6. During the following few years, we took in a local of New York waist makers, a local of wrapper makers and a Philadelphia organization of waist workers. We couldn't however, escape the diseases of childhood—shop strikes which used to exhaust us, lack of funds and of organizing material and experience, and we even had to taste, for the first time, the whip of a court injunction.

Our next convention was held in Cleveland in 1903, and we began to feel like a regular international. But the clock again turned back on us for the next two years, until, in 1905, about a thousand reefermakers joined our body, and things began to liven up. Followed the successful strike of reefermakers in 1907, interspersed with defeats in Boston and in Cleveland, resignations of some locals to whom we could not render any assistance in time of need, and, in this [illegible] ence, we reached 1909, the year of the great revolt of the waist-makers, which should be put down as the year when our International Union finally came into its own and started upon a new era of its development.

And now a few facts concerning the so-called political side of the I.L.G.W.U. in those early years.

Herman Grossman—President

Herman Grossman was president of the I.L.G.W.U. from 1900 to 1903, when he was defeated, at the Cleveland convention, by Benjamin Schlesinger. The latter was succeeded in 1904, at the Boston convention, by James MacCauley of the Cutters' Union, also at that convention John A. Dyche was elected general secretary-treasurer. In point of fact, it was not Dyche who was elected, but a Boston delegate. Some charges, however, were raised against that man, and the New York delegates withdrew from the convention and refused to pay per capita tax to the organization unless that secretary would abdicate. President Samuel Gompers of the A. F. of L. later decided that the secretary-elect was not eligible to hold office and Dyche took his place. Dyche remained at that post until 1914.

1907 was the darkest year in the early history of the I.L.G.W.U., industrially and organizationally. The Cutters' Union was expelled during that year from the International for violation of trade union ethics, and as MacCauley, the president, was a member of the cutters' local, he had to resign. Charles Jacobson, first vice-president, filled that office in the interim. We came to our 1908 convention in Philadelphia with but 17 delegates, and some of these delegates reached the City of Brotherly Love on foot as they had no train fare. The convention itself was a sad affair, and our whole membership amounted to not more than 2,000. No one wished to run for office, and it was under such gloomy circumstances that I was persuaded to assume the post of president. It was, by the way, not a paid position then. I remained president until 1914.

The next year was a year of intense organizing. We revived our Boston union and made contacts with Chicago, where the cloakmakers were not affiliated with the I.L.G.W.U. In fact, I became their manager for a short time and persuaded them to join our international organization during that time.

A New Era Dawns

This brings us to the next, heroic period of the I.L.G.W.U., the great strikes of the waistmakers in 1909 and of the cloakmakers in 1910. But I shall not touch upon this period.—I intended only to sketch briefly the early phases of our Union, its formative days. I only desire to say to our younger men and women to whom these early struggles of the pioners are unknown: Remember, it takes untold sacrifice, blood and treasure to build up a trade union. The great International Union we have today in the women's garment industry of America didn't fall down from the skies into our lap—it took generations of ground-laying, of tireless spade-work, to make its growth possible.

Draw your own conclusions from these brief notes.

One Year's Work in Union City, N.J.

By WILLIAM ALTMAN
Manager, Local 148

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It was exactly one year ago, in May, 1933, that I was assigned by the Out-of-Town Department of the International to take charge of the organization campaign among the dressmakers of Union City, N. J., and nearby localities. It was a peculiar organization campaign, for I had no headquarters at all, not even a telephone at which to be reached in case of necessity. And the dressmakers, whom I tried to approach in front of their shops with the purpose of interesting them in our Union, were even afraid to be seen with me or to talk to me.

The Communists had previously started some sort of a movement here, but as happened in other localities, they left behind only disillusionment and distrust. The most active workers in their following soon joined with us, with the result that most of them are today good and useful members of our local.

The Memorable August 16

During the month of July, 1933, we were engaged in two dress strikes in Bayonne, a fact that helped a great deal to build up the necessary morale among the dressmakers for the coming general strike. As in every other locality of the Out-of-Town territory, the morning of August 16 saw in Union City, Bayonne, Jersey City, etc., a demonstration that was not dreamed of by even the most optimistic among us.

Over three thousand dressmakers, working in 90 shops, scattered in Union City, West New York, Tenafly, Englewood, Dumont, Fairview, Hoboken, Jersey City and Bayonne, N. J., constitute our Local 148. While the members may still have something to learn about trade unionism, yet, they have done a great deal, and all they have accomplished deserves the highest praise. We have a group of members who are extremely alert and always ready to help other workers to organize. I wish to mention in this connection the great help rendered by the dressmakers of this section in the campaign to organize the workers in the Schiffli embroidery, ladies' neckwear and knitted goods industries. Aside from the dressmakers, our local has succeeded in organizing the workers of 2 children's dress shops, 2 white goods and 2 blouse shops—a total of 250 workers in all.

Our Daily Work

Our Executive Board, of which John Miceli is chairman, and Nancy Pellicano, secretary, meets every Monday night. Branch meetings in different localities are held every two months, and shop chairlady as well as shop meetings take place frequently. Other committees essential for the proper functioning and administration of the local are constantly at work. Our educational activities are well under way. Almost every week, we conduct lectures, with English and Italian speakers alternating. Recreational activities are not forgotten, either. After the installation meeting, previously reported in these columns, Local 148 held a "victory dance" and celebration on the night of May 4, at the Elks Auditorium in Union City, attended by close to two thousand people, and the affair was so successful that it is still the talk of the town.

Credit is due to our business agents, Brothers J. Rabinow and Charles Cirricione, for their untiring efforts, as well as to May Gippa and Jack Nieburg, complaint clerks of our Union City and Bayonne offices, respectively.

All in all, Local 148 is a local to which our parent body, the International, may point with pride.

Neckwear Workers Show Vigor

By JOSEPH TUVIM
Manager Local 142

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An astounding number of members, especially for a local union recently organized, took part in the election of officers of the Ladies' Neckwear Workers' Union, Local 142. Close to 1,100 came to the polls and elected a complete administrative staff for the current year.

The following were elected: Joseph Tuvim, manager; Murray Hoffer, president; Anna Wenger, recording secretary; Max K. Pollikoff, financial secretary; William Newman, vice-president.

Ben Danciger, Esther Snyder and Kate Adler—finance committee; Anna Lee Petkus, Peter Todaro—organization committee. Executive Board—George Badame, Ernst Rathkopf, Ralph Bloom, Emanuel Flax, Charles Filangieri, Ben Danciger, John Giamo, Mildred Bailey, Gertrude [illegible], Sadie Albanese, Olive Ramirez, S. Applebaum, Nettie D'Amico, Jennie Comiter, Bella Arons and May Marino.

On March 9, at Webster Hall, 1,800 members of Local 142 attended the "Victory Ball," arranged to celebrate the formation of the local, the organization of the industry and the establishment of union work conditions in the shops. President David Dubinsky, Brothers Sol Polakoff, Abraham Snyder, Joseph Kessler and other union leaders were present. The newly-elected officers were installed by President Dubinsky at that ball.

The local is cooperating with the Educational Department of the International in educational activity for our members. On March 17, a group of 100 members met at the International headquarters at 3 West 16th Street. A visit to the Union Health Center and to the Dental Clinic preceded the luncheon arranged by Sister Cohn, after which the group boarded a bus and went directly to the Museum of Art.

Another such outing took place the 21st of April.

The educational committee of the local is planning to call semi-weekly group shop meetings for the purpose of instructing the members in trade unionism. Four students have been sent by us to the Rand School of Social Science to take seriously the study of trade unionism and kindred subjects.

In the organization field, Local 142 has signed up within the past few weeks 17 shops with 250 workers. Our industry has had its best season in ten years and as conditions indicate, the season should continue until the end of May. The members of Local 142 have had steady work since the early part of January.

St. Louis Joint Board Thanks G.E.B.

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At a special meeting of all executive board and joint boards of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union of St. Louis, Missouri, held on Wednesday, March 21, 1934, to bid Brother Halpern goodbye, a resolution was adopted that we send to the General Executive Baord our fullest appreciation and thanks for sending to us in a time of need so valuable a leader.

The valuable work he has done here and the friends he has made for our Union will long be remembered.

We regret very much that the General Executive Board has called him for other duties. We do, however, pledge our loyalty and support in carrying out his program for bigger and stronger unions. We do hope that if the time ever comes when we will need the help of a general organizer again, Brother Halpern will be sent to St. Louis to help us.

SAM GOLDBERG,
President, Joint Board.
CLARA KAISER,
Secretary, Joint Board.
JOSEPH SCHUVER,
President, Cutters' Local No. 16.
H. CORNBLEET,
Secretary, Pressers' Local No. 103.
ZELDA LEFKOWITZ,
Pres., Dressmakers' Local No. 104.

Delegates and Officers of St. Louis Joint Board

NEW MANAGER FOR LOCAL 144, NEWARK, N. J.

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Readers of "Justice" are already informed that Sister Anna Sosnofsky, who was in charge of our Newark Dressmakers' Local, No. 144, since last summer, left the office early last March. Brother Antonino Crivello, formerly secretary-treasurer of the New York Dressmakers' Joint Board, was selected in her place. We are happy to state that when, at a meeting of chairladies and executive board members of Local 144, his name was announced as successor to Sister Anna Sosnofsky, all those present cheered loudly and promised Brother Crivello the utmost cooperation. This was repeated at a farewell party in honor of the retiring manager, which took place on Friday, March 2, at the Workmen's Circle Labor Lyceum in Newark. A large number of active members were present, also many delegates from nearby locals and representatives of our office. The speakers praised highly the work of Sister Sosnofsky, who was also presented with a gift as a token of appreciation for the remarkable progress achieved by the Local under her leadership.

The high degree of interest in union life already displayed by the members of Local 144, may be best illustrated by the fact that 16 candidates ran for delegates to the convention, in the election recently held, and at which more than 1,500 participated. Sisters Anna Sosnofsky and Mollie Ferrara and Brothers Antonino Crivello and Louis Boal were the candidates elected.

UNITY HOUSE, the Summer Rest and Vacation Home of the I. L. G. W. U. will be Open for Business and Ready to Receive Guests on Saturday, May 26, 1934.

THE OFFICIAL OPENING of the House will Take Place on Saturday, June 23, over a Week-End Replete with Extraordinary Amusement Features. Watch for Announcements in the Daily Press. Reservations Are Already Being Made. Apply to Unity House Office, 3 West 16th Street, New York City,—Telephone, CHelsea 3-2148.

JACOB HALPERN,
Manager, Unity House

COHEN & LITZ SUBSIDIARY UNIONIZED

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Strike Brings Wage Increase

Cohen and Litz, union dress jobbers, were operating a dress house in Allentown, Pa., under the name of the Well Made Dress Company. This subsidiary, ostensibly having no connection with the Cohen and Litz shop, was not unionized and operated under the Cotton Code. They were paying their workers from $9.75 to a maximum of $13 a week regardless of craft. And they worked a 40-hour week.

I. Horowitz, of the out-of-town department, was assigned to the job of bringing the Allentown shop into the Union. A strike was called on April 8, and by the 9th it was all over. The Well Made Dress Company had become a union shop. Now its workers are union workers and besides having received heavy wage increases, they operate under a thirty-five hour week.

It is understood that the code authority is cooperating with the Union in seeking to regain for the workers some $26,000 which they lost while working for the lower wages.

The Cutters' Union • Sixty-five Years Old

A Brief Factual History of Local 10

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It is most appropriate, at this time, when we are about to begin the Twenty-second Biennial Convention in Chicago, the periodical conclave at which we take inventory of our achievements and setbacks for the intra-convention periods, that we extend our greetings to the General Excutive Board the [illegible] administration [illegible] of our International [illegible]

President, Brother David Dubinsky, the "little Iron Man," through whose able leadership and unparalleled energy and devotion we were able to take advantage of the opportunity which the NRA presented to organized labor and emerge from the agonizing four years of chaos into stability and orderliness in industry and work conditions.

More power and success to you, Bro. President and entire General Executive Board, in all your future undertakings.

Executive Board, Local 10, I. L. G. W. U.
Samuel Perlmutter, Manager-Secretary

On Thanksgiving Day, 1869, Uriah S. Stephens, a Philadelphia cutter, called first unit of a labor organization. Stephens was a member of a garment cutters' union which had been organized in 1862 or 1863 but had reached the conclusion that open organization by workers was a failure and that secret organization was necessary. That organization was the Knights of Labor.

In January, 1884, the Gotham Knife Cutters' Association of New York was chartered by the Knights of Labor as Local Assembly 3035. It was a mixed local and the parent organization of what is now the Amalgamated Ladies' Garment Cutters' Union, Local 10. The cutters' assembly, however, was founded in the period of open organization in the sense that its general purposes were known. The initial ceremony was a compound of religious ritual, mysticism, and faith in the power of labor.

During its first year, 1884, this local was weak in membership and in funds. A report for the last quarter indicated an income of a little over $50 a month. Among the trade matters considered at the meetings were the use of the big knife in some shops, overtime, wages, quantity of work and closer cooperation with the clothing cutters.

During the following year, 1885, the entire cloak trade was convulsed by a general strike. Jewish immigrants had already entered the industry at that time and participated in the strike which lasted two weeks. The bosses were organized as the Cloak Manufacturers' Association and an agreement was reached by arbitration. The Gotham Knife Cutters, in the fourth year of its existence, was still a weak organization and by the end of 1887 there were only 127 members in good standing in that local.

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In the last four years of the '80's strikes of cloakmakers were frequent. Unions were organized and disappeared the eight-hour agitation and intolerable conditions in the garment industry bringing out the workers of the shops time after time. Only the Gotham Association and the United Cloak and Suit Cutters' Association, a group organized about 1887, maintained continuous organization during that period. The Gotham Association, it is interesting to note, made an attempt, in August, 1890, to organize a women's auxiliary group to be known as "Lady Gotham." During that same year, the Gotham group began displaying its community of interests with the other groups in the cloak industry by contributing to the striking cloakmakers, involved in a bitter strike-lockout which lasted nine weeks, to the United Suit Cutters, and by helping to organize shirt operators.

The support given by the cutters to that strike helped much towards its success. For the first time an agreement was reached that gave recognition to the Union by the cloak manufacturers' association. That strike was lead by Joseph Barondess, later known as the "king of the cloakmakers." An extraordinary feature of the separate settlement made by the United Cloak and Suit Cutters' Association with the bosses was an agreement to pay the cuters full wages for every day they were on strike.

From 1890 to 1895 the life of the Gotham Knife Cutters, officially, is a blank. These years were a period of final struggle between the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor for the allegiance of the organized workers; of dual unions, a nation-wide industrial depression, and a disastrous strike in the garment industry in 1894 which became general and prostrated the unions in the cloak trade. The United Cloak and Suit Cutters went out of existence. In 1894, this local affiliated with the United Garment Workers but within a year its members no longer met. Gotham members, however, participated in the organization of another union of cutters in 1895 which was incorporated under the ambitious name of "The United Wrapper, Tea Gown, and Ladies' Waist Cutters' Protective and Benevolent Association of New York.

The Gotham Knife Cutters maintained a precarious existence and in 1901 amended their constitution, completely eliminating all secret Knight of Labor features from their rules of conduct and turning definitely on the path of straight trade unionism.

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By that time the women's garment industry began to expand on a large scale. In the decade of 1890-1900, despite bad conditions in industry, the volume of the trade and of the workers employed in it became more than doubled. New branches of industry were also added in the making of shirtwaists and women's underwear. Of equal significance was the organization of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in New York in 1900. The organization of suit cutters, therefore, was the logical sequence of the expansion of the industry and of the general revival of unionism following the industrial depression of the middle '90's.

So when a group of cutters called in the Summer of 1901 a meeting of workers for the purpose of forming a trade union, 500 responded and organized a permanent body on August 7 of that year. Not all of those who came to that meeting, however, joined and the growth of the new body was rather slow. Early in 1902, the group adopted a set of by-laws, and joined the I.L.G.W.U. as The United Cloak and Suit Cutters' Association, Local No. 6.

One of the first steps of the new local was "to organize and to harmonize the different warring factions in the trade," implying the old Gotham Knife group and a new group—The Manhattan Knife Cutters, a union of shirt and waist cutters whose members were chiefly drawn from the East Side, where the scales were lower. This move finally ended in the absorption of both groups by the United, Local No. 6, in January, 1906, but not before a bitter controversy which raged for several years and led at one time to the expulsion of Local No. 6 from the I.L.G.W.U. In the next few years, Local No. 6, which after the amalgamation with the other groups, became known as Local No. 10, was continuing to make progress. In 1902 it decided to abolish day-work and to establish a minimum wage of $24 a week, and three years later it decided to demand a wage of $28 a week and the 48-hour week. It also decided to elect a paid business agent, but this project didn't materialize until 1907 for lack of income.

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The amalgamation of the New York cutters into one local was accompanied by a revision of its rules. It made admission of new members more restrictive, and raised slightly the weekly dues. In the first years of its existence, Local 10, however, became embroiled in difficulties with other locals and the International until its charter was revoked in 1907. That took place at a time when the International was badly affected by the industrial stagnation and was losing members and entire locals. The strife between the cutters and the other workers in the industry added to the gloom that possessed the entire organization. The leaders of the local appealed to the convention of the A. F. of L. for help, and the Executive Council appointed an arbitrator to decide upon the controversial issues. The result was a decision by the arbitrator, Cornelius Ford, instructing the General Executive Board of the I.L.G.W.U. to reinstate Local 10 to its rights, and when the convention of the International met in Philadelphia in 1908, it was presented with this decision. General Secretary John A. Dyche of the I.L.G.W.U., however, refused to recognize the legality of the Ford decision.

The fight raged for another year and a half. The I.L.G.W.U. chartered a new cutters' local, also known as Local 10, and this added fuel to the fires of dissension. Finally, a compromise agreement worked out by the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. proved acceptable to all concerned and in February, 1910, Local 10 was restored to the I.L.G.W.U. The restoration of Local 10 was a harbinger of a fruitful year for the International itself. The industrial depression which had set in in 1908 was passing, and when the I.L.G.W.U. convention met in Boston in June, 1910, President Rosenberg could report 36 new locals organized, two reorganized, two amalgamations of locals and only nine locals disbanded.

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The strike of the shirtwaist makers in 1909 and the strike of the cloakmakers in 1910 were the culmination of a long train of abuses which had become intolerable and affected severely every craft, including the cutters. In the cloak trade, the outcome was the signing of an agreement known as the "Protocol of Peace." Both strikes came as a godsend to the cutters. Their conditions were considerably improved and the wage increases for them, especially in the cloak trade, were greater than the increases granted to the other workers. For the first time, the 50-hour work-week was established in the industry and double pay for overtime became the law in all shops.

In 1911, Local 10 aided materially in a great strike in Cleveland by sending representatives to assist in the strike and by contributing funds. A year later Local 10 performed similar service in the general strike of the dressmakers, white goods workers and house dress and kimono workers. Masses of new members continued to flow into the cutters' organization and by the end of 1912, Local 10 had some 6,000 members. To facilitate the transaction of the business of the local, which had become unwieldly owing to the number of different crafts represented in it, it became advisable to divide the organization into branches. But the change was not made until 1915, when Local 10 decided to subdivide into three branches, Cloak and Suit, Dress and Miscellaneous trades. In general, that period showed a large increase in membership, expansion of activities, a broader outlook and the development of new problems.

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In 1916, Local 10 obtained $27.50 per week for full-fledged cutters, double pay for overtime and a 40-hour week. Early in May of that year, a big strike in the cloak and skirt industries began after the Manufacturers' Protective Association refused an invitation by Mayor Mitchell of New York to meet representatives of the International and of the Joint Board. By that time, the protocol was abrogated by the employers on the question of equal distribution of work. The struggle began as a lockout on the part of the manufacturers and ended with substantial gains for the Union the following August. The new agreement provided for the preferential union shop, $29 a week for cloak and suit cutters, while skirt cutters advanced from $23.50 to $25. Since 1913, the wages of waist and dress cutters had increased from $20 to 27.50. By the end of that year, Local 10, after a strenuous campaign, succeeded in winning from a board of arbitration an award for dress and waist cutters, raising their scales to $29 a week.

Meantime, the nation was drifting into war while the local's activities had considerably expanded and financing them was becoming a problem. To meet this difficulty, the dues were increased from 15 to 2Ic a week. In that same year the local installed a medical department and became affiliated, together with other locals, with a sanatorium to take care of tuberculous cutters and those afflicted with chronic diseases.

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The war brought about a drop of the purchasing power of the dollar and cutters in all branches began clamoring for increases in wages and a shorter work-week. One by one, these demands were taken up in all the industries and raises were obtained for the waist and dress, cloak, underwear, raincoat and house dress cutters, up to $35 a week. These numerous changes in wage-scales were obtained without the necessity of resorting to strikes. Toward the end of 1918, Local 10, which for years had been publishing its own bulletin, "The Ladies' Garment Cutter," merged its own publication together with all other journals published by the various local unions in New York City into one paper published by the International in three languages.

Following the armistice in November, 1918, there were ominous signs that the organized employers of the country would make an assault on wages and the trade unions. Local 10 at that time submitted a demand for 44 hours in the waist and dress industry. The employers defiantly dejected that, and the result was a great strike in which 35,000 people were involved. This was followed by a strike in May, 1919, also for the 44-hour week, and both strikes were won.

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1919 was a notable year in the history of Local 10 and of the Union as a whole. The movement for shorter hours and for

A Designer Union Comes Into Being

By P. KOTTLER
Manager, Local No. 30

Comparatively nothing has been heard of the cloak designer in the past few years. He has taken no part in all the conflicts, stoppages and conferences between the cloakmakers and the bosses. Even during the NRA period, when even the truck drivers were recognized as part of the industry, the designers remained neglected and forgotten—this, in spite of the fact that the designer always was and will be one of the most vital factors in the cloak industry. An analysis of the designer's condition and his problems during that period will explain the situation.

Old Local Crumples

At one time, not so long ago, the designers were strongly unionized—they had their own local in the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; they were affiliated with the Joint Board, and they enjoyed all the privileges and benefits that the International extends to its affiliated locals. Unfortunately, the designers' local was among the first to fall victim to the insidious, poisonous propaganda that was conducted for years against the cloakmakers' union, and it crumbled and fell and on its ruins arose three opposing factions. While the designers' local was still under the Joint Board, there existed a group of designers who blindly stuck to the idea that the designers needed no union. They organized a club and never joined the Union. Some of them, individually, had been forced to join the designers' local, but they remained opposed to the idea of unionization, and with the destruction of the International local, their position strengthened. The union supporters formed a separate group, and the Italians in the profession then decided to form a group of their own.

Thus, the designers were split into three factions and the results of this were not slow in coming; working conditions for the designer began rolling down-hill. For a short time, there was no curtailment of the privileges of those designers who had sided with the bosses. Presently, however, the bosses forgot the aid and comfort given to them by the designers at the time of the strike, and they discarded their silk gloves in dealing with them. Designers' salaries were cut and slashed mercilessly.

Designers Feel Axe

The tide of depression made matters worse. The manufacturers were ready to grab at straws and they all began to drive for economy, to cut expenses. In this mad stampede, the designers, too, felt the axe, so to speak, and they began to realize that their position as a privileged important group in the industry was being shaken. New contracts were not being offered, and the designer was reduced to the stage of a week-worker or piece-worker, like the cutter, operator, finisher or presser, with this difference—that the manufacturer could send him home and stop his pay at any time. In fact, it reached the stage where designers were employed for only short periods, during the height of the season. What was worse, this condition threatened the very existence of the designer—his initiative and sources of inspiration.

All who are familiar with the cloak industry know the position the designer has always held in it. Not only was he handsomely paid, but all sorts of privileges were accorded him, including trips to Paris, the races, and so forth, so that he might see the latest creations of fashion and be inspired to copy and produce. And in most cases, he had assigned to him in the shop a complete staff of sample tailors. Now, however, in the drive for economy, the manufacturer was constantly scheming to save, at the designer's expense, and avoided paying him wages by not [illegible] samples until the season was actually at hand. Then everything had to be rushed out in four weeks whereas it would previously have been given three months' time.

New Type of Houses

Out of this, came the new type of model houses. Model houses, in general, are an old institution in the industry. Their business is to import creations from Paris for copying purposes. They rent out the new models to manufacturers, who give them to their designers for copying. Each designer uses only certain ideas and lines of a model, creating a garment that is more in conformity with his own taste and the demands of the American trade. But, in the rush for speed and economy on the part of the bosses, a new form of style-copying sprang into existence, an industry of style-pirating en masse. Designers finding themselves unemployed would rent a small place, get hold of a second-hand machine or two, a press-board, etc., and go in for style manufacturing. They would pirate these styles from the import houses, then peddle their copies of styles to manufacturers, offering a ready pattern also. They would then sell the same model and pattern to dozens of manufacturers. With a ready-made pattern, the manufacturer would need no designer. He would merely engage one to trim the samples and make a change here and there to hide the similarity. Thus was the designer robbed of all initiative and degraded from the position of an artist to that of a mechanic.

Union Finally Comes

So began the agitation for a solid, single protective organization for all designers, and two years ago the designers [illegible] as a local of the American Federation of Labor. It is to be regretted, however, that a large number of the designers did not join the newly-formed union, with the result that all attempts to secure recognition from the manufacturers or to be taken into the I.L.G.W.U. as a local union, or to enter under the Coat and Suit Code, were unsuccessful. The designers' local finally swung into action and called a strike of all the designers in the trade.

A committee of that organization then conferred with President David Dubinsky of the International, and he promptly promised them standing as a local of the International, including the support of the entire International body. An experienced organizer was required to lead the strike, and at Brother Dubinsky's recommendation, the writer was engaged as manager of their local. The strike was called on November 21 and was an instantaneous strike. We gained a strong, well-organized union, and were granted union recognition on 6-month term contracts.

At present we have contracts with 360 manufacturers, employing 370 designers under six-month term contracts. We have also organized the model shops, and they have signed a collective agreement not to sell models, sketches or patterns to any manufacturer not employing a designer who is a member of our Union. Our membership consists of 450 dues-paying expert designers. And at last, after many hardships, the designer has come to know that his only hope for better conditions lies in a strong union affiliated with our International.

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higher wages was planful and systematic. Shortly thereafter, Local 10 became properly affiliated with the Joint Board in the cloak and suit industry. Until then, all its business had been directed from Local 10. Under the new arrangement, the cutters, like all other crafts, were to have their shop business adjusted through the general office of the Joint Board. This meant limitation of the local's autonomy, but it also meant greater cohesion and more uniform control of work conditions.

1921 marked another struggle in the waist and dress industry resulting from an insistence by the employers upon a wage reduction of 20 per cent. In February of that year, the strike took place and came to an end by the end of the month with a settlement of over 1,300 shops. The cutters responded, took a very active part in this strike, and contributed greatly to its success.

During that period, Local 10 took an active part in the drive against the "corporation" or "social" shops which became quite a problem in the industry. Shortly thereafter, in 1923, the joint boards in both the cloak and dress trades were amalgamated and the management in these two major branches of the garment industry became centralized within one body. That year saw also the beginning of the formation of Communist nuclei within a number of I.L.G.W.U. locals and also in Local 10, which eventually led to the tragic events of 1925 and 1926.

During the next two years that followed, the Union was rocked to its very foundations by the factional war which was stirred up by the Communists and the Joint Action Committee. This is part of the general history of the Union, but during that period, Local 10 stood out as the rock of Gibraltar against all attempts of disruptive elements to convert it into a tail-end of a political machine. Even during the dark period when the Joint Board actually fell under the control of the Communists in 1926, Local 10 maintained its position as a loyal organization of the I.L.G.W.U.

During the reconstruction period, when the I.L.G.W.U. assumed full control of the cloak and dress organization in New York City and reasserted its authority over them, Local 10 contributed more than its share of material resources towards this great objective. The entire strength of the cutters' union in the shops, at meetings, and as a solid unit in the industry—stood back of the rehabilitation efforts of the International.

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During the years which followed, 1927, 1928 and up to the general strike of the cloakmakers in 1929, Local 10 managed to preserve its strength in the shops despite the general deplorable situation into which these industries had fallen. And in the 1929 strike, when the cloakmakers' union finally gathered its strength again, Local 10 was found among the first on the firing line and reaped its share of the harvest which that strike brought to the New York cloakmakers' organization as a whole.

Then came the period of depression. Like all other workers in the women's garment industry, the cutters were affected by the crisis. There was unemployment on a large scale and countless attempts to break down conditions in the shops. The evil of contractors doing their own cutting was spreading to alarming proportions. And together with all the other locals of the cloak and dress organization, Local 10 kept on fighting off, with its back to the wall at times, these inroads upon the work standards of its members and waiting and biding its time for a chance to reassert itself in the industry at the opportune time.

When that time came in 1933, Local 10 took full advantage of the opportunity. This brief review of the history of the Cutters' Union leaves no room for a detailed account of the achievements of Local 10 in the past year. Suffice it to say that the cutters' organization has today more than twice the number of members it had at any of the most prosperous periods of its long existence. With the thousands of new members who have come into the organization, from the dress industry, especially, in 1933, new problems of consolidation, education and administration have come to the front. The local, however, has met these problems with foresight and planning which are bound to make good unionists out of the newcomers and train them in the school of traditional loyalty to labor principles and labor fighting methods. Local 10 is today more united than ever before in its history and looks forward to the future with fully merited optimism, to unbroken progress and expansion.

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In these long years of the existence of Local 10, a great many men of vision, foresight, courage and loyalty, have come to the front as leaders and generals of the cutters' army. It would be difficult, within this limited space, to even attempt to make mention of all these men whose memory is dear to the heart of every loyal member of Local 10. Some of them, however, have left such a deep imprint upon the life of Local 10 and upon the living and working conditions of the cutters, that their names should not be omitted.

Outstanding among these were:

DAVID DUBINSKY, manager-secretary of Local 10 from 1922 to 1929, when he resigned to become general secretary-treasurer of the I.L.G.W.U.

SAMUEL PERLMUTTER, who joined Local 10 in 1910 and who has since been very active in the organization and has, since 1929, been manager-secretary of Local 10.

ELMER ROSENBERG, who served as president, general-secretary, and editor of the "Ladies' Garment Cutter" from 1913 to 1919.

JOHN C. RYAN, who served for several terms as president of the old cutters' Local 6, was president of Local 10 from 1913 to 1915, and has been innumerable times Joint Board delegate, delegate to conventions and member of important committees in a number of strikes.

JESSE P. COHEN, one of the most untiring members in the work of establishing the cutters as a strong union. He served the Union in many responsible positions, including business manager, president, vice-president and secretary.

ISIDORE NAGLER, who served the Union from 1920 and as executive board member, secretary of the Board, later as manager of the Industrial Council Department and subsequently as general manager of the Joint Board of Cloakmakers' Unions.

Editorial Notes

We Salute The Convention!

THE TWENTY-SECOND CONVENTION of the I. L. G. W. U. is here.

It is a jubilee convention marking the 35th anniversary of the existence of the Ladies' Garment Workers' International organization as an autonomous affiliate of the American Federation of Labor, a milestone upon a winding, tortuous road leading from feeble, pathetic beginnings toward the wider expanse of collective human achievement.

Behind this milestone, other markers—over a span of three and a half decades—attest to the stormy career of the women's garment workers' union. Victories, failures, bewildering advance checked by tragic retreat, progress mitigated by retrenchment dot the long march of the Union. Yet, through all this travail the head of the I. L. G. W. U. column is never turned back—it never wavers even in retreat as it presses on toward the sun.

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Not a jubilee convention this one but a miracle convention, an assembly come together to celebrate the resurrection of a movement seldom equaled in the annals of America's labor.

Parallels, comparisons fairly swamp the mind as one thinks of but a recent yesteryear. Philadelphia, in 1932, held another convention of the I. L. G. W. U. and before the Cleveland, in the Winter of 1929, on the eve of the Hoover crisis. The economic collapse was then carrying us, together with all bodies of organized labor, downward with catastrophic speed. Stricken with uncertainty, dazed by the suddenness and completeness of the crash, our single guiding thought at those conventions was—how to re-form our shattered lines, how to heal the most exposed breaches in our defenses, and how to save the organization from utter collapse.

What a contrast this year! Vibrating confidence, pulsating faith in the invincibility of our I. L. G. W. U. is reverberating throughout our vast membership from coast to coast. We are coming to Chicago with more than a quadrupled membership. Within less than a year we have achieved results that herculean efforts of a decade failed to yield to us before. We have not only recovered our lost ground, not merely set our house in order, but have broken all records of our organizational past, materially, morally and spiritually.

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But the Twenty-second Convention, we know this too well, will not confine itself to holiday-making only.

The I. L. G. W. U. does not do things by halves. As long as there is in America a single group of women's garment workers anywhere left outside of our fold we shall not consider our task complete. There are still undergarment, cotton dress and minor trades workers by the thousand outside the scope of our organization—in the Midwest, the South and even in the East. A stronger, richer in resources I. L. G. W. U. will reach out after these workers—after the convention is over—and will try to bring to them the benefits of trade union organization. There are also the immensely vital problems of consolidating the masses of the newly affiliated workers which the convention will have earnestly to consider. We must likewise coordinate our rules and ways of democratic trade union management and adapt them to our newly won numerical strength.

These problems the Convention will approach in a spirit of buoyant confidence born of recent experience. Can there be a doubt that the difficulties connected with the solution of these problems, real and formidable as some of them are, will be swept out of the way by the driving force of our Union's present leadership?

Justice salutes the Jubilee Convention!

Big Chiselers Vs. Little Ones

WE ARE NOT AT ALL CERTAIN that the abortive lockout of the New York dress contractors, last April, has taught a lesson or pounded home a moral to its precipitators. Some people just naturally can neither learn new things nor forget old ways. To the Union, however, that disturbing incident has furnished invaluable added proof that the work of assimilating the countless thousands of new members it gained during the blazing strike of last Summer and of imbuing them with trade union morale and discipline, has been a thorough success.

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The Dressmakers' organization proved to the entire industry that it was not, and refused to be, the tool of either the jobbers or the contractors in their guerilla warfare. The Union declined to permit its members to be used as a club by either group of employers. As Vice-president Julius Hochman tersely stated it during the heat of the clash: "The jobbers are the big chiselers and the contractors are the little chiselers and that is the only difference between them. The workers cannot be on one side against the other. The interests of the workers demand that they be opposed to both."

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Throughout that stoppage, the contractors tried to play the role of "friend" to the dressmakers. They went so far as to issue a circular which they distributed around the halls asking for the sympathy of the workers and urging them to force the Union to call a general strike. But the workers and their Union would do nothing of the kind. If the Union had thought it advisable to call a strike, and certainly it would never have called one at the tail-end of a bad season, it would call the strike on its own initiative and would not be maneuvered into it by the contractors.

The events which followed proved conclusively that only the Union has the right to speak and to act for the dress workers. The dress workers are the Union.

Cleveland's Renaissance

LAST YEAR WAS A RED-LETTER YEAR for most of our organizations, from one end of the land to the other.

In no other city, however, not excepting Philadelphia, was the overturn as complete as in Cleveland. In Philadelphia, at least, the cloakmakers' locals were holding on to some agreements with the employers and to control in the shops. In Cleveland, it seemed, the organization was definitely exhausted and fighting for its last gasp.

The splendid comeback which the Cleveland division of the I. L. G. W. U. staged, the signing of collective agreements in both cloak and dress lines and the Union's reassertion of its position of control of work conditions in the shops, is a fine tribute to the indomitable courage of the rank and file of our Cleveland organization and to the vision and sagacity of their leadership.

"The I. L. G. W. U. On The Air"

THE RADIO BROADCAST PROGRAMS, initiated on April 6 by President Dubinsky in New York over Station WEVD and a network of Eastern stations, are a sensational success.

If we are to judge by the volume of favorable publicity these I. L. G. W. U. air programs receive in the public press, we should reach the inescapable conclusion that the "Union Assembly," with its guest speakers, its choice musical organizations and contributing stage stars, is one of the most select hours of the current radio season. Its educational and publicizing value, for our International, can hardly be overestimated.

The "Union Assembly," let us hope, will remain a permanent feature of our educational activity. It already has a great audience and this audience keeps constantly growing. The "I. L. G. W. U. On the Air" has proved its worth fully.